

Gregory Palamas and the Making of Palamism in the Modern Age

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Introduction: a sign of contradiction

It is a paradox that although Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor have engaged the attention of Western theologians very fruitfully in recent decades, their greatest interpreter within the Greek tradition, Gregory Palamas (c.1296–1357), continues to be regarded with the utmost suspicion. Admittedly, Dionysius has not had an easy passage. Although received as an authoritative theologian in the East by Maximus the Confessor and John Damascene, and in the West by Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, his reputation was tarnished by the ‘Pseudo’ label attached to him at the end of the nineteenth century and has only recently been repristinated as a result of the post-modern enthusiasm for apophaticism.¹ Maximus has fared rather better. Since Hans Urs von Balthasar’s seminal *Kosmische Liturgie*, first published in 1941, he has become a major focus of Western patristic scholarship.² Logically, it should now be Palamas’ turn to profit from this appetite for rehabilitating important but neglected Greek theological thinkers. In Palamas’ case, however, there are several difficulties peculiar to him.

One difficulty is the role of Palamas in Orthodox identity politics. Since the revival of interest in him by theologians of the Russian diaspora, notably Basil Krivoshein (1900–1985), Kiprian Kern (1899–1960), Vladimir Lossky (1903–1958), and John Meyendorff (1926–1992), Palamas has served to emphasize Orthodox distinctiveness with regard to Western Christianity. This is not accidental. Lossky and Meyendorff, in particular, had more than one aim in promoting Palamas. Ostensibly, they wanted to defend the integrity of the Orthodox theological tradition in the face of the accusation of Martin Jugie (1878–1954) that (p.2) one of its venerated exponents, Gregory Palamas, was quasi-heretical. But they were also keen to mark off Orthodoxy from the dominant Roman Catholicism of their French environment, and at the same time to demonstrate the relevance of Palamas to current Western theological concerns—hence Meyendorff’s presentation of Palamas as an exponent of a personalist and existential theology. There are also several subtexts. One is the interest of the mainly Jesuit and Dominican leaders of *la nouvelle théologie* in the thinking of their Orthodox confrères, and indeed their active encouragement of it. Lossky’s famous *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l’Église d’Orient*, which some regard as the most important Orthodox work of the twentieth century, began in fact as a series of lectures given in 1944 to a Roman Catholic audience at the request of Henri de Lubac (1896–1991), Yves Congar (1904–1995), and Jean Daniélou (1905–1974).³ A further subtext is Lossky’s intense concern to combat the sophiology of Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944) with another, supposedly more authentic, version of the essence–energies distinction. The identity politics in which the retrieval of Palamas played a significant part was as much an intra-Orthodox as an East–West affair.

Another difficulty is the perceived strangeness of Palamas. This is due in large part to the close relationship between Palamas and Dionysius. At every turn, Palamas appeals to ‘the great Dionysius’ as his chief authority, and Dionysius has seemed to many modern commentators a strange figure, more a disguised Neoplatonist than a Christian. Alexander Golitzin, however, has done much to situate the Dionysian corpus fully within the Eastern monastic tradition.⁴ Dionysius is only strange when read out of his proper context, which is not late antique pagan Neoplatonism but the

deeply Christian world of sixth-century Syrian monasticism. Indeed, I would say that as an introduction to Palamas' thinking, one could hardly do better than read Golitzin's *Mystagogy*. In this he presents the Dionysian corpus as a coherent and unified structure which is both strikingly original and remarkably faithful, the fidelity 'not applying primarily to the pagans, from whom Dionysius did indeed borrow, but to the already long-established currents in Greek Christian speculation—and meditation—on the mystery of God in Christ'.⁵ Palamas, in Golitzin's view, was in turn a faithful interpreter of Dionysius; he was not an innovator but a theologian 'engaged in the defense of a tradition, both of theology and ascetic practice, that long antedated him'.⁶

(p.3) A third difficulty concerns the commonly held opinion that Palamas is rationally incoherent. Not only do we find this opinion in major Western authors such as Robert Jenson and John Milbank, but also in a Greek philosopher such as Stelios Ramfos, who finds Palamas' use of *enhypostasia* unconvincing, or in an Orthodox theologian such as David Bentley Hart, who expresses the hope that some of his confrères 'might be emboldened partly to abandon the Neo-Palamite theology that has become so dominant in their Church since the middle of the last century, and frankly acknowledge its incoherence'.⁷ The opinion that Hart rejects seems to me to be based more on Lossky's elevation of the idea 'antinomy' to a fundamental theological principle than it is on Palamas himself.⁸ I have not found any instances in Palamas' voluminous writings of what could be characterized as 'antinomic' thinking in Lossky's sense.⁹ Certainly, the divine essence is utterly transcendent. But this is presented by Palamas as beyond discursive thought rather than as logically inconsistent with the accessibility of the divine energies. If anything, Palamas relied more heavily on logic than any of his opponents, including the philosophers Barlaam of Calabria (c.1290–1348) and Nikephoros Gregoras (c.1290–c.1360). Barlaam was much more cautious than Palamas about the applicability of apodictic demonstration to intra-Trinitarian relations.¹⁰ Gregoras, for his part, refused to deal in Aristotelian syllogisms at all, regarding them as fit only for inferior minds.¹¹ The anti-logical movement that has been noted in Byzantium in the fourteenth century could not count Palamas among its adherents.¹²

Finally, Palamas has rarely been considered in a dispassionate manner. Jugie's construction of 'Palamism', a term he invented for polemical purposes, has proved so robust that it still dominates Western attitudes towards Palamas, despite—or perhaps partly because of—the work of Meyendorff and others. Meyendorff himself seems to have accepted the concept of Palamism in his earlier writings, largely because he was bent on constructing an alternative Palamism. Although his major work, *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas*, **(p.4)** was warmly received when it was first published in 1959, the partisan approach evident in it led to a reaction in the decades that followed. It is only in the last twenty years that new work has tried to break the polemical mould set by Jugie and Meyendorff and treat Palamas as a worthy theological conversation partner.

Palamas' *Nachleben* in the Greek-Speaking World

When Palamas died, probably in 1357,¹³ his theology had been vindicated by the Constantinopolitan Council of 1351, but there was a substantial minority who felt that, even though the anathemas pronounced on the anti-Palamites had been inserted into the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* in the following year, the council's decisions were not morally binding because its proceedings had been manipulated by the emperor John Kantakouzenos (c.1295–1383; reigned 1347–1354) to arrive at a predetermined conclusion. The leaders of the continuing opposition to Palamism were not treated particularly harshly. The four opposing metropolitans were deposed in 1351 and three of them confined to monasteries.¹⁴ The layman Nikephoros Gregoras was placed under house-arrest until 1354, when Kantakouzenos' forced abdication led to a change of policy. John V Palaiologos (1332–1391; reigned 1341–1391) continued to rule as sole emperor, but although interested in the Palamite controversy—he even organized a debate at the imperial palace between Palamas and Gregoras—he was not inclined to force a definitive solution.¹⁵ The definitive solution was to come fourteen years later as a result of an initiative taken by the patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (c.1300–c.1377; patriarch 1353–1354/5, 1364–1376).

The year 1354 was significant not only for the abdication of John Kantakouzenos, but also for the completion of the first of the works of Thomas Aquinas (c.1225–1274) to be translated into Greek.¹⁶ This was the *Summa contra Gentiles*, translated by Kantakouzenos' chief minister, Demetrios Kydones (c.1324–c.1398). The translation was an immediate success, and was followed by (p.5) the translation of other Latin works, in which task Demetrios was assisted by his brother, Prochoros (c.1333/4–1369/70), a monk of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos. The philosophical and theological method of Aquinas excited much interest amongst both Palamites and anti-Palamites. In Prochoros' case, Aquinas' method provided him with a method of argumentation by which he could mount a sustained attack upon Palamas' essence–energies distinction.¹⁷ When he extended his attack to include the growing cult of Palamas as a saint, his trial by a Constantinopolitan synod became inevitable. At a council held in 1368, Prochoros was found guilty of heresy and stripped of the priesthood. At the same time, the patriarch Philotheos took the opportunity to establish Palamas' sanctity in a formal manner. He prepared for this carefully, collecting a substantial dossier of posthumous miracles to support the official glorification of Gregory Palamas as a saint of the Orthodox Church.

After 1368, many of the opponents of Palamite theology joined the Latin Church.¹⁸ The West thus first came to know of Palamas through the writings of his adversaries. At the Council of Ferrara–Florence (1438–1439), Palamite theology was not discussed, even though the Latin side was fully aware of it. The leaders on both sides were anxious to come to an agreement, and there were sufficient difficult theological problems to be debated without adding yet another one. In the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Palamas' writings as well as several collections of Palamite texts were acquired by manuscript collectors. But they lay unstudied in the great libraries of Paris and Rome until the seventeenth century, when they were exploited by theologians of the newly confident post-Tridentine Roman Catholic Church intent, in the confessionally competitive atmosphere of the times, on expanding the influence and authority of the Holy See. When the Orthodox of the Greek-speaking world became aware of this, they responded vigorously. With the aim

of countering Western attempts at proselytization within the Ottoman Empire, Dositheos II of Jerusalem (1641–1707; patriarch 1669–1707) established the first Greek printing press under Orthodox control. As part of this programme, he published several Palamite texts, including conciliar documents, in order to demonstrate that Palamism was not a Greek heresy but the officially endorsed teaching of the Orthodox Church. He also planned a complete edition of Palamas' works but was unable to do more than assemble a number of manuscripts, which he sent to Moscow.¹⁹

(p.6) In the following century, Palamas played a role in the movement of spiritual renewal initiated by Makarios of Corinth (1731–1805), Athanasios of Paros (c.1721–1813) and Nikodemos the Hagiorite (1749–1809). One of the fruits of this movement was the publication of the *Philokalia*, whose anthology of texts included several by Palamite authors and by Palamas himself, notably the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*.²⁰ Like Dositheos, Nikodemos planned to publish a complete edition of Palamas' works. He got as far as sending his manuscript to a printer in Vienna, but was thwarted at the last moment by the nervousness of the Austrian authorities about anything that might be construed as supporting the revolutionary fervour then developing in Greece.²¹ The Greek-speaking world had to wait until the twentieth century before it was able to re-appropriate Palamite teaching. The fact that it did so was in large measure due to the Russian experience of Palamism.

Palamas in Russia

Russians were slow to receive Palamas. This was not because they had any particular animus against him. The strand of hesychasm that took root in Russia with Nil Sorskii (c.1433–1508) was that of Gregory of Sinai (c.1255–c.1345) rather than of Gregory Palamas. Later, when the *Philokalia* reached Russia, it was in the version of Paisii Velichkovsky (1722–1794), which did not include Palamas. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that Russians really encountered Palamite theology.

This encounter came by two routes. The first was through the work of historians in a period noted for the quality of Russian historical research. The publications of Modest Strelbitsky (1823–1902), Porfyrii Uspensky (1804–1885), and Feodor Uspensky (1845–1928) enabled Russian readers to acquire a sound knowledge of the hesychast controversy and the theological issues raised by it. The second route was through monastic writers in the context of the *imiaslavie* controversy, a controversy concerning the divinity or glorification of the holy name that broke out just before the First World War. The first route emphasized the anti-Latin aspects of Palamism; the second focused on Palamite teaching **(p.7)** on deification and the vision of the divine light. The *imiaslavie* controversy, however, revealed a deep division among Russian churchmen between those, like Antonii Khrapovitsky (1863–1936), who were suspicious of the religious turn of the intelligentsia (the 'Russian religious renaissance' in Nicholas Zernov's phrase) and were only comfortable with the traditional rationalist theology and authoritarian Church order of tsarist Russia, and those, like Antonii Bulatovich (1870–1919) and his supporters, who gave greater weight to the Church's mystical tradition and valued the more speculative theological trends in vogue at the end of the nineteenth century.

This division between the conservative traditionalists and those attracted to the more speculative and mystical currents of Russian thought was brought to the West as a result of the emigration following the Bolshevik Revolution. Khrapovitsky became head of the conservative Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). The leaders of the Russian religious renaissance who settled in Paris initially remained faithful to the newly re-established Moscow patriarchate but were themselves divided on the issue of Bulgakov's sophiology. In the development of his ideas, Bulgakov made use of Palamite thinking, which he saw as supportive of his doctrine of divine Sophia. His most articulate opponent, Vladimir Lossky, argued that Palamas' teaching on divine-human communion actually excluded sophiological ideas. Lossky was therefore strongly motivated to deepen his study of Palamas, especially in view of a new factor that emerged in the early 1930s, the direct attack on Palamas from the Roman Catholic side initiated by Martin Jugie.

The Twentieth-Century Retrieval of Palamas

When Jugie published his magisterial articles on Palamas and the Palamite controversy in 1932,²² he was not seeking to undermine contemporary Orthodoxy's esteem for Palamas. He believed that Palamas' ideas had been quietly abandoned after his death and had long since become a dead letter. His aim was to demonstrate that if the Roman Catholic Church had officially promulgated new doctrines, such as the *Filioque* in the eleventh century and the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in the nineteenth, so too had the Orthodox Church in the form of Palamism in the fourteenth. His ultimate purpose was to persuade the Orthodox to submit to the magisterium of the Roman Church as the only infallible guide to truth. From Jugie's point of view, the project backfired badly, stimulating an impressive revival of interest in Palamite studies (p.8) among the Orthodox. Jugie, who died in 1954, was spared a further humiliating development, the rejection by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council of the triumphalism that he took for granted and their cautious willingness to see 'many elements of sanctification and of truth' outside the visible structure of the Roman Catholic Church.²³

The publication of Meyendorff's *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas* gave scholars, for the first time in a Western language, a full presentation of the fourteenth-century hesychast controversy on the basis of a study of the manuscript sources together with a vigorous defence of Palamite theology.²⁴ One of Meyendorff's underlying aims was, like Lossky, to delineate an Orthodox identity which would help Francophone Orthodox of the Russian diaspora resist assimilation to the dominant Roman Catholic form of Christianity yet at the same time put Orthodoxy alongside Western Christianity as an ally in the common struggle to articulate a response to the challenges facing the Churches after the Second World War. In each of the two parts of his aim, Meyendorff achieved only a limited success. With regard to the first, his existentialist and personalist interpretation of Palamas met with opposition from some Orthodox, notably from Krivoshein and Elisabeth Behr-Sigel (1907–2005).²⁵ With regard to the second, although some Anglicans and Roman Catholics, such as Eric Mascall (1905–1993), Louis Bouyer (1913–2004), and André de Halleux (1929–1994), responded warmly,²⁶ most Western theologians continued to find Jugie's construction of Palamism more plausible than his own.

The critical reception of Meyendorff's work falls into two phases. The first was centred on an analysis of the *Introduction* and a critique of its methodology. The second was dominated by the sharply polemical debate that subsequently arose in the theological journals between opponents and defenders of Palamism. This is hardly surprising, given the polemical orientation of Meyendorff's own exposition of Palamite theology in the *Introduction* (mitigated slightly in the English translation),²⁷ which was bound to provoke opposition. Moreover, the (p.9) book appeared at the beginning of a period of intense conflict in the Roman Catholic Church at around the time of the Second Vatican Council. It was to be expected that its commendation by supporters of theological pluralism such as de Halleux (although de Halleux himself was careful to avoid a relativist line) should draw a sharp response from neo-Thomists, such as Marie-Joseph Le Guillou (1920–1990) and Jean-Miguel Garrigues,²⁸ who regarded scholastic principles as the yardstick of doctrinal orthodoxy. Some Thomists were happy to emphasize points of agreement between Palamas and Thomas,²⁹ but the *Istina* authors were sceptical. For them there was another issue, too, even if they did not make it explicit: Meyendorff lent unwelcome support to their opponents in the *nouvelle théologie* camp, who seemed to them to blur the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. The debate stimulated by Meyendorff's book had repercussions within the Roman Catholic communion.

In subsequent publications, Meyendorff revised the over-schematic presentation of Palamas' theology that characterizes his *Introduction*, but he did not abandon his fundamental position. Palamas, in his view, was firmly based in the patristic tradition. His teaching on the interpenetration of the divine and the human in a Christ who possessed two wills and two energies was that of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (held in Constantinople in 680–681). His account of how the believer could participate in the divinized humanity of Christ was, as he claimed, an authentic explication (ἀνάπτυξις) of the decree of that council. His elaboration of the distinction between essence and energies was not a speculative move but an attempt to safeguard the reality of the believer's participation in Christ without compromising the absolute transcendence of God. Meyendorff's arguments for the orthodoxy and experiential value of this teaching did not prove convincing enough to overcome the deeply rooted Western suspicion of Palamas, but it was to prove extremely fecund in suggesting further lines of research.

In the years after the Second Vatican Council, a reaction set in against Palamite theology as presented by Lossky and Meyendorff. This was led by the Dominicans of the *Istina* Centre in Paris, who in 1974 published an issue of their journal, *Istina*, in which they set out to combat the 'false irenicism' that they felt had prevailed during the previous decade.³⁰ The controversy they stirred up through a quartet of distinguished articles still reverberates in much current writing on Palamas.³¹

New Areas of Research

(p.10) In the last thirty years, important publications have opened up new areas of research in several different fields. The work of Byzantinists such as Antonio Rigo and Ioannis Polemis has sharpened our historical perception of the events leading up to 'the triumph of Palamism'.³² Our knowledge of the philosophical currents that shaped the thinking of the period has grown enormously as a result of the labours of

Linus Benakis, Ioannis Polemis, John Demetracopoulos, and many others.³³ Theological work, especially by Amphilochios Radović and Stavros Yangazoglou, has shed light on a number of important issues, especially the relationships between essence–energies and essence–hypostases, and between the economies of the Son and of the Spirit.³⁴ Our knowledge of Palamas’ opponents has also been extended through the work of Juan Nadal Cañellas (1934–2016),³⁵ Antonis Fyrigos,³⁶ Michele Trizio,³⁷ and Demetrios Moschos.³⁸ Several Roman Catholic scholars, particularly Jacques Lison, have made strenuous efforts to aid the reception of Palamas in the West.³⁹ Yet it must be confessed that Jugie’s perspective (supported by scholars such as Dorothea Wendebourg, (p.11) Gerhard Podskalsky [1937–2013], and Juan Nadal) continues to dominate Western thinking. Jugie’s ecclesiological motives for his judgements may no longer be persuasive, but his neo-Thomist dismissal of the distinctions Palamas sought to make still carries immense weight.

Work on Palamas, however, to deepen our understanding of the philosophical and theological context of his thinking has been taking place not only through the publication of monographs and articles on Palamas and his contemporaries but also through the holding of colloquia and conferences which have sought to bring together Orthodox and Western scholars—even professed Palamites and anti-Palamites—in a fruitful manner. Moreover, there has also been an extraordinary burgeoning of interest in Palamas as a spiritual teacher, and this has extended well beyond the boundaries of the Orthodox Church. Each of these three modes of encounter with Palamas—the theological-philosophical, the dialectical, and the spiritual—has something important to offer.

The first mode naturally predominates in the academy. It is striking that most of the monographs on Palamas published during the last twenty years concentrate on Palamas’ account of religious experience.⁴⁰ It is the nature of this experience, rather than the more abstract philosophical aspects of essence and energy, that has attracted much of the research. Another area of interest, since Anna Williams’s attempt to show that Palamas and Aquinas, as representatives of the Eastern and Western traditions, respectively, are not in opposition to each other but offer fundamentally similar models of sanctification, has been the impact of Thomism on Palamas and other hesychast writers.⁴¹ It has become clear that in the fourteenth century, Byzantium and the West did not inhabit mutually incomprehensible intellectual worlds, even if their theological outlooks may be sharply contrasted, but shared similar concerns and were even interested in each other’s philosophical methodology.⁴²

The second mode of encounter with Palamas, the dialectical, has resulted in some lively exchanges and disagreements, which have by no means all been across the confessional divide. A key figure in facilitating these has been Christoph Schneider, currently Academic Director of the Institute for Orthodox Christian (p.12) Studies in Cambridge. In 2005, with the help of Adrian Pabst, he organized a conference in Cambridge that brought together leading theologians of the chiefly Anglican Radical Orthodoxy movement and a number of distinguished Eastern Orthodox theologians, primarily to explore what their traditions had in common.⁴³ Inevitably, Gregory Palamas was always in the background, and sometimes in the foreground, too, particularly in an account of the differing Eastern and Western approaches to ontology presented by Nikolaos Loudovikos and the response by John Milbank.⁴⁴ On

questions of intersubjectivity, illumination, and participation, Loudovikos finds Palamas entirely persuasive, whereas Milbank strongly prefers Aquinas.

A writer cited by both Loudovikos and Milbank is David Bradshaw, the author of a book on the reception of Aristotle in East and West that has aroused a good deal of controversy.⁴⁵ Bradshaw's work was at the centre of a second conference organized in Cambridge by Schneider (this time with the help of Constantinos Athanasopoulos), which resulted in a book devoted entirely to Palamas' essence–energies distinction.⁴⁶ Convinced that the Greek tradition which culminated in Palamas understood Aristotle better than the West did, Bradshaw makes a plea for Palamas to be taken seriously as a philosophical thinker. He is strongly opposed by Milbank and others,⁴⁷ but supported by Loudovikos, who develops an interesting contrast between the notion of participation held by Palamas (which he calls a 'dialogical syn-energy', leading to assimilation to God through the divine energies) and that taught by Aquinas (which he characterizes as 'emanational similitude', an intellectual conformation to God without the transformation of the bodily senses).⁴⁸ The lack of consensus on Bradshaw's thesis emphasizes the deep divisions which continue to exist on the significance of Palamas.

The third mode of encounter with Palamas' teaching, the spiritual, is also highly contentious. It is associated by many Orthodox writers with a 'therapeutic ecclesiology', which emphasizes the ascent of the soul to God through purification, illumination, and glorification, ideally under the guidance of a spiritual (p.13) father but often with little reference to the sacraments.⁴⁹ It is also associated more broadly with the 'Philokalic movement', which seeks to promote the use of the Jesus Prayer, usually, its critics maintain, in a strongly individualistic manner detached from any ecclesial context.⁵⁰ One of the central figures in this movement was Dumitru Stăniloae (1903–1993), who published a work drawing on the Fathers of the *Philokalia* (and particularly, in his section on deification, on Gregory Palamas) under the title, *Orthodox Spirituality*.⁵¹ Despite its Western-sounding title, the work is in fact in line with traditional Orthodox ascetical teaching, insisting that the spiritual ascent is always an ascent within the Church that is achieved through the graces imparted by the holy mysteries.⁵² Another work in the same genre is *Becoming Uncreated* by the Serbian Orthodox priest Daniel Rogich, who teaches a course on the Jesus Prayer at a Jesuit university.⁵³ Although Rogich also focuses on the mystical ascent, he is careful not to treat it in isolation from Palamas' Chalcedonian Christology or emphasis on the Church's sacramental life.

Raising the Larger Questions

An indispensable tool for any work on Palamas is a book chapter by Robert Sinkewicz that offers a brief but comprehensive overview of Palamas under the headings of biography, works, theology, and bibliography.⁵⁴ At the conclusion of his study, Sinkewicz summarizes the situation at the beginning of the twenty-first century in the following words:

In a short space such as this, it is only possible to suggest some directions for future research. The dossier of texts published is ample, but there is still much work to be done in completing the necessary editions and the much needed detailed

analyses (p.14) of the content of texts. Even so, it is time to begin raising some of the larger questions posed by this episode of Byzantine religious history.⁵⁵

The dossier of texts to which Sinkewicz refers is not that of Palamas but of his contemporaries, some of them not involved directly in the hesychast controversy, who shed a fascinating light on many of the issues debated by Palamas and his adversaries. Palamas' own writings have all been published already in adequate, if not always exemplary, editions, one of the chief fruits of Meyendorff's publication in 1959 not only of his *Introduction* but also of the first critical edition of the *Triads* accompanied by a French translation.⁵⁶ The complete works, published in Thessaloniki in five volumes between 1962 and 1992,⁵⁷ have recently been made more accessible through a three-volume edition with an Italian translation on the facing page by the remarkable psychiatrist and philosopher, Ettore Perrella.⁵⁸ The increased accessibility of these works has only recently begun to be exploited.

Heeding Sinkewicz's call to raise the larger questions, I attempt in Part II of this book to follow the contours of Palamas' thinking in three areas: his relationship to tradition, with a discussion of why he found it so difficult to obtain universal acceptance of his 'explication' of patristic teaching (Chapter 5), his philosophical approach, with a focus on his understanding of participation (Chapter 6), and his theological account of divine-human communion, with an examination of the doctrine of divine grace entailed by it (Chapter 7). The method I have followed is historical, partly because none of the participants in the controversy was trying to construct a systematic theology, and partly because Palamas himself changed or developed several of his opinions as the controversy unfolded.

With regard to tradition, Palamas stands somewhere between his main opponents, Barlaam and Akindynos. Against Barlaam, he rejects the authority of profane wisdom, which in his view can in no way lead to knowledge of God. But against Akindynos, he opposes what he regards as a pedestrian exegesis of patristic texts and allows himself a more speculative approach (in a philosophical rather than an allegorical sense), in developing the implications of what the Fathers teach. These are personal choices, reflecting not only his monastic vocation but also the Hellenic formation he received in his adolescence under (p.15) his teacher, the philosopher Theodore Metochites (1270–1332).⁵⁹ Surprisingly, he holds a rather modern view of 'theology'. He connects it not with the experience of God in the manner of Evagrius Ponticus ('a theologian is one who prays, and one who prays is a theologian'⁶⁰), but with human discourse *about* God. Against *theologia* he sets *theoptia*, the direct knowledge of God which is gained by 'seeing' him through the illumination of divine grace.⁶¹

The trouble Palamas had in obtaining general assent to his teaching as an authentic exposition of patristic teaching was due to two factors: his innovative terminology, particularly his use of the word θεότητες ('divinities' or 'deities') to characterize the divine energies, and the convoluted political situation of the time. Theologically, Palamas had great difficulty in persuading his opponents that new terminology did not entail novel doctrines but was necessary in order to respond to new challenges to orthodox teaching. Politically, he found himself in a situation during the civil war of 1341–1347 and its aftermath in which the exercise of ecclesiastical and imperial authority was dysfunctional. In normal circumstances, the councils of June and July 1341, which exonerated Palamas from the charge of heresy brought by Barlaam, and condemned both Barlaam and Akindynos, would have been decisive. But the

emperor Andronikos III died suddenly a week after the June council, and consequently the synodal tome published by the patriarch John Kalekas in the following year makes no mention of the council of July, the one at which Akindynos was condemned.⁶² The two councils of 1341 were followed immediately by the civil war between John Kantakouzenos and the regency governing in the name of Andronikos III's son, John V Palaiologos. The two pro-Palamite councils that were held after the war, in 1347 and 1351, when Kantakouzenos was reigning as co-emperor with John V, were perceived by many as Kantakouzenist. John V (whose long reign lasted until 1391) had other religio-political priorities than to impose a Kantakouzenist solution on the hesychast controversy, so the dispute dragged on until the patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos seized the opportunity in 1368 to have Palamas declared a saint. The Latin West experienced a similar controversy at about the same time, which was likewise bitter and drawn out precisely because there was no political will at the top to enforce a solution. But in the (p.16) Latin case, the relatively swift succession of a new pope ensured that the matter was ended quickly and decisively.⁶³

On the philosophical level, Palamas' chief work was the elaboration of the essence–energies distinction.⁶⁴ This raised questions at the time, and these are still hotly debated. Does the distinction compromise divine simplicity? Does it remove the persons of the Trinity from the possibility of human experience by introducing a new level of being between God and humanity? To decide on this it is necessary to be clear about what Palamas was actually affirming and what he was denying. But even when we have grasped his meaning accurately, can we say that it has *sense*? And if it does, is it necessary? If Ockham's razor is applied, do we lose anything? These questions are still open. My own view is that Palamas has extrapolated his essence–energies distinction legitimately from Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, although the Cappadocians are not the only thinkers who have influenced him,⁶⁵ and that it provides a satisfactory solution to the problem of the relationship between the One and the Many.

On the theological level, Palamas elaborates a doctrine of grace that is often wrongly understood to be opposed to that of Aquinas. The distinction that Palamas makes between grace as the giving of the gift and grace as the gift given is equivalent to Aquinas' distinction between uncreated and created grace. Grace as the gift given makes participation in grace as the giving of the gift possible, for the two are different facets of the same divine energy from the viewpoints, respectively, of the giver and the recipient. The reception of grace thus becomes participation in the energy of theosis, the energy by which the believer's adoption by the Son in the Holy Spirit is brought about. Palamas crowns and completes the patristic doctrine of deification with a theological explanation which is worthy of serious attention.

Palamas, however, was not simply an intellectual who conducted theological debates with his opponents on a high theoretical level. In 1347, he became (p.17) metropolitan of Thessaloniki and in that capacity has left us a body of homilies which, together with the letters of spiritual counsel he wrote, shows us that he did not regard deifying grace as the preserve of monastics alone. Ordinary Christians may not be able to undertake the contemplative ascent to the vision of light, but by keeping the commandments and participating in the Church's ecclesial life, they open themselves equally to the operation of grace and to the eventual appropriation of divine glory.

In the last chapter, I respond to the hope expressed by the founder of the Institute of Saint Sergius in Paris, Metropolitan Evlogy (1868–1946), that his foundation (where Kiprian Kern and his pupil John Meyendorff were to produce their work on Palamas) would bring Orthodoxy out from under its bushel, so that it ‘would gradually become the inheritance of all Christians’.⁶⁶ Palamas could become an ecumenical figure if the ideological constructions of the twentieth century are set aside and his teaching is understood on its own terms. His melody (to borrow a metaphor from Paul Gavrilyuk) could add a rich independent voice to the hitherto dominant homophony of the Western tradition, so that each part, as in true polyphony, finally modifies the others. (p.18)

Notes:

(1) As amply documented by the essays in Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang (eds), *Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

(2) Von Balthasar’s book was re-issued in an expanded second edition at the beginning of the 1960s as *Kosmische Liturgie: Das Weltbild Maximus’ des Bekkenners* (Einsiedeln: Johannes-Verlag, 1961). ‘By the mid-1960s,’ Andrew Louth has written, ‘scholarship of Maximus was becoming something of an industry’ (‘Maximus the Confessor’s Influence and Reception in Byzantine and Modern Orthodoxy’, in Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil [eds], *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015], 500–15, at 508). On the reception of Maximus, see also Joshua Lollar, ‘Reception of Maximian Thought in the Modern Era’, in the same volume, 564–80.

(3) Vladimir Lossky, *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l’Église d’Orient* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1944). English translation: *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke, 1957).

(4) Among his many publications, see especially Alexander Golitzin, *Mystagogy* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2013).

(5) Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, xxxviii.

(6) Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 392; cf. Alexander Golitzin, ‘Dionysius the Areopagite in the Works of Gregory Palamas. On the Question of a “Christological Corrective” and Related Matters’, *SVTQ* 46 (2002), 163–90.

(7) David Bentley Hart, ‘Foreword’, in Adrian Pabst and Christoph Schneider (eds), *Encounter Between Eastern Orthodoxy and Radical Orthodoxy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), xiii.

(8) Antinomy is defined by Lossky as characterizing a theology ‘which proceeds by oppositions of contrary but equally true propositions’ (Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God* [Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001], 51).

(9) Palamas never uses the term ἀντινομία (which for him would have meant ‘a conflict of laws’) but he does refer to ἀντίφασις (‘contradiction’), which he vigorously rejects: ‘How is a contradiction not oppositional, or how is it not impossible that they can both be true or both false at the same time? For in the case of a contradiction, if one of the two is unorthodox, the other is necessarily orthodox’ (Palamas, *Letter to Philotheos* 7 [Christou II, 523; Perrella III, 982]).

(¹⁰) See Robert E. Sinkewicz, 'The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian', *Medieval Studies* 44 (1982), 181–242.

(¹¹) See Demetrios N. Moschos, Πλατωνισμός ἢ Χριστιανισμός; Οἱ φιλοσοφικὲς προϋποθέσεις τοῦ Ἀντιουχασμοῦ τοῦ Νικηφόρου Γρηγοροῦ (1293–1361) (Athens: Parousia, 1998), 165–6, 181–7.

(¹²) Katerina Ierodiakonou, 'The Anti-Logical Movement in the Fourteenth Century', in Katerina Ierodiakonou (ed.), *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 219–36.

(¹³) Palamas died on the 14 November, traditionally in 1359. Strong arguments, however, have been proposed for regarding the year as 1357; see Antonio Rigo, 'La canonizzazione di Gregorio Palama (1368) ed alcuni altre questioni', *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici* 30 (1993), 155–202.

(¹⁴) These were Joseph of Ganos, Neophytos of Philippi, and Makarios of Serres. A fourth metropolitan, Matthew of Ephesus (Manuel Gabbalas) was deposed but apparently not imprisoned. Matthew was a distinguished figure who had courageously entered Ephesus (then under the rule of the emir Khidir Beg) in 1339 in an attempt to take possession of his see and minister to his flock. He has left a body of letters, some treatises on Homer, and two hundred chapters of moral counsel. For further details, see Alice-Mary Talbot, 'Gabbalas, Manuel', *ODB* ii, 811–12.

(¹⁵) The chief priority of John V (who privately submitted to Rome in 1369) was to establish good relations with the West and obtain Western help in resisting further Turkish expansion.

(¹⁶) On the reception of Aquinas in the Greek East, see Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

(¹⁷) For details, see Norman Russell, 'Prochoros Cydones and the fourteenth-century understanding of Orthodoxy', in Andrew Louth and Augustine Casiday (eds), *Byzantine Orthodoxies* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2006), 75–91.

(¹⁸) On how this came about, see Norman Russell, 'Palamas and the Circle of Demetrius Cydones', in Charalambos Dendrinos et al. (eds), *Porphyrogenita. Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 153–74.

(¹⁹) For more details, see Klaus-Peter Todt, 'Dositheos II. von Jerusalem', in Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello and Vassa Conticello (eds), *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition II (XIIIe–XIXe s.)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 659–720; Norman Russell, 'From the "Shield of Orthodoxy" to the "Tome of Joy": The Anti-Western Stance of Dositheos II of Jerusalem', in George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (eds), *Orthodox Constructions of the West* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 71–82.

(²⁰) In keeping with Nikodemos' aim of spiritual edification, however, all references to Barlaam and Akindynos were excised.

(²¹) The full story is told by Antonio Rigo, 'Nicodemo l'Aghiorita e la sua edizione delle opere di Gregorio Palamas', in Adalberto Mainardi (ed.), *Paissij lo staretz* (Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 1997), 165–82.

(²²) Martin Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire' and 'Palamite (controverse)', *DTC* 11, part 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), 1735–818.

(²³) See the Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 8.

(²⁴) Jean Meyendorff, *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959).

(²⁵) B. Krivoshein, 'Sviatoi Grigorii Palama. Lichnost' i uchenie po nedavno opublikovannym materialam' [Saint Gregory Palamas. Personhood and doctrine according to recently published materials], *Messenger de l'exarchat du patriarche russe en Europe occidentale* 9 (1960), no. 33–4, 101–4; Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, 'Reflections sur la doctrine de Grégoire Palamas', *Contacts* 12 (1960), 118–25.

(²⁶) For Mascall see, for example, E. L. Mascall, *The Openness of Being: Natural Theology Today* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1971, 221–4; for Bouyer, Louis Bouyer, 'Byzantine Spirituality' in Jean Leclercq, François Vandenbroucke, and Louis Bouyer (eds), *The Spirituality of the Middle Ages* (London: Burns and Oates, 1968), 547–90, at 547, and Louis Bouyer, *Le Consolateur: Éspirit-Saint et la vie de Grâce* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1980), 316–22; for de Halleux, André de Halleux, 'Palamisme et Scolastique. Exclusivisme dogmatique ou pluriformité théologique?' *Revue théologique de Louvain* 4 (1973), 409–42.

(²⁷) The first footnote of Part II, chapter 5, for example, states that this chapter (which comes as the climax of Meyendorff's theological exposition) has in view the analyses of Jugie, Guichardan, and Candal (Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 279, n. 1). The footnote was dropped from the English translation.

(²⁸) See the articles in the special issue of the Dominican journal *Istina* devoted mainly to Palamas: *Istina* 19 (1974).

(²⁹) For example, Ch. Journet, 'Palamisme et Thomisme. À propos d'un livre récent', *Revue thomiste* 60 (1960), 430–52.

(³⁰) *Istina* 19 (1974). The phrase 'false irenicism' is from *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 11.

(³¹) The four articles in *Istina* 19 (1974) are Jean-Philippe Houdret, 'Palamas et les Cappadociens', 260–71; Jean-Miguel Garrigues, 'L'énergie divine et la grâce chez Maxime the Confesseur', 272–96; Juan Sergio Nadal, 'La critique par Akindynos de l'herméneutique patristique de Palamas', 297–328; Marie-Joseph Le Guillou, 'Lumière et charité dans la doctrine Palamite de divinisation', 329–38.

(³²) Of their many important publications, two have been especially valuable for the present study: Antonio Rigo, *Monaci Esicasti e Monaci Bogomili* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1989); Ioannis D. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea: His Life and Works* (Vienna: Der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996).

(³³) Benakis's valuable but often inaccessible studies have now been collected in Linos G. Benakis, *Texts and Studies on Byzantine Philosophy* (Athens: Parousia, 2002). For my purposes, Demetracopoulos's most significant study is John A. Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed. Palamite Interpretations of the Distinction between God's "Essence" and "Energies" in Late Byzantium', in Martin Hinterberger and Chris Schabel (eds), *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History 1204–1500* (Leuven, Paris, and Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011), 263–372.

(34) See especially Métropolite Amphiloque (Radović) du Monténégro et du Littoral, *Le mystère de la Sainte Trinité selon Saint Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2012); Stavros Yangazoglou, *Κοινωνία θεώσεως* (Athens: Domos, 2001).

(35) Juan Nadal Cañellas, 'Gregorio Akíndynos', in Conticello and Conticello, *La théologie byzantine II*, 189–314; Juan Nadal Cañellas, *La résistance d'Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas. Enquête historique, avec introduction et commentaire de quatre traités édités récemment*, 2 vols. (Leuven: Peeters, 2006). The second volume, which is Nadal's commentary on the treatises, is the best detailed account of the hesychast controversy (from a strongly Akindynist point of view) since Meyendorff. (Perhaps it should be mentioned that Juan Nadal Cañellas is the same scholar as Juan Sergio Nadal, who contributed one of the quartet of articles on Palamas to the 1974 edition of *Istina*.)

(36) Among Fyrigos' important body of work on Barlaam, I have relied principally on his edition of Barlaam's letters, introduced by a fine study of Barlaam's role in the hesychast controversy: Antonis Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica alla polemica esicasta* (Rome: Antonianum, 2005).

(37) Trizio has also worked extensively on Barlaam; see especially Michele Trizio, 'Una è la verità che pervade ogni cosa'. *La sapienza profana nelle opere perdute di Barlaam Calabro*, in Antonio Rigo, Pavel Ermilov, and Michele Trizio (eds), *Byzantine Theology and its Philosophical Background* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 108–40.

(38) Demetrios N. Moschos, Πλατωνισμός ἢ Χριστιανισμός, has superseded earlier work on Gregoras, although R. Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras. L'homme et l'œuvre* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1926, and Hans-Veit Beyer, 'Nikephoros Gregoras als Theologe und sein erstes Auftreten gegen die Hesychasten', *JÖB* 20 (1971), 171–88, are still of value.

(39) Jacques Lison, *L'Esprit répandu. La pneumatologie de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1994).

(40) For example, Yannis Spiteris, *Palamas: la grazia e l'esperienza: Gregorio Palamas nella discussione teologica* (Rome: Lipa, 1996); Håkan Gunnarsson, *Mystical Realism in the Early Theology of Gregory Palamas: Context and Analysis* (Göteborg: Skrifter Utgivna vid Institutionen för Religionsvetenskap, Göteborgs Universitet, 2002); Fadi A. Georgi, *Ἡ Ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ Ζωή: Ἡ Ἑσχατολογία τοῦ Γρηγορίου Παλαμᾶ* (Athens: Barbounaki, 2010); Britta Müller-Schauenburg, *Religiöse Erfahrung. Spiritualität und theologische Argumentation: Gotteslehre und Gottebenbildlichkeit bei Gregorios Palamas* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011).

(41) A. N. Williams, *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); cf. Marcus Plested's fine study, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*.

(42) Valuable studies of Greek–Latin philosophical and theological interaction may be found in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*; Hinterberger and Schabel, *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History*; and John A. Demetracopoulos and Charalambos Dendrinos (eds), *When East met West: The Reception of Latin Theological Thought*

in *Late Byzantium* (extracted from *Nicolaus*, Rivista di Teologia ecumenico-patristica, Fasc. 1, 2013).

(43) The papers and discussions of that conference, together with some additional articles, have been published in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*.

(44) Nicholas Loudovikos, 'Ontology Celebrated: Remarks of an Orthodox on Radical Orthodoxy', in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, 141–55; John Milbank, 'Ecumenical Orthodoxy—A Response to Nicholas Loudovikos', in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, 156–64.

(45) David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

(46) Constantinos Athanasopoulos and Christoph Schneider (eds), *Divine Essence and Divine Energies: Ecumenical Reflections on the Presence of God in Eastern Orthodoxy* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2013).

(47) None more strongly than David Bentley Hart in his 'Foreword' to Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, xiii.

(48) Nikolaos Loudovikos, 'Striving for Participation: Palamite Analogy as Dialogical Syn-energy and Thomist Analogy as Emanational Similitude', in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence*, 122–48.

(49) A therapeutic ecclesiology has been attributed, with justice, to Fr John Romanides. His disciple Hierotheos Vlachos, metropolitan of Naupaktos, has written a book on Palamas which exemplifies this approach: Metropolitan of Nafpaktos Hierotheos, *St. Gregory Palamas as a Haghiarite*, trans. Esther Williams (Levadia: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1997).

(50) See the articles in Brock Bingaman and Bradley Nassif (eds), *The Philokalia: A Classic Text of Orthodox Spirituality* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). For a fascinating glimpse of the outer reaches of the 'Philokalic movement', see Christopher D. L. Johnson, *The Globalization of Hesychasm and the Jesus Prayer: Contesting Contemplation* (London and New York: Continuum, 2010).

(51) Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar* (Canaan, PA: St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2003).

(52) Stăniloae, *Orthodox Spirituality*, 66.

(53) Daniel M. Rogich, *Becoming Uncreated: The Journey to Human Authenticity—Updating the Spiritual Christology of Gregory Palamas* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1997). Fr Rogich teaches in the department of theology at Walsh University, Canton, Ohio.

(54) Robert E. Sinkewicz, 'Gregory Palamas', in Conticello and Conticello, *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition, II*, 131–88.

(55) Sinkewicz, 'Gregory Palamas', 173.

(⁵⁶) Jean Meyendorff, *Grégoire Palamas, Défense des saints hésychastes. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes*, 2 vols (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1959).

(⁵⁷) Panagiotis Christou et al. (eds), *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, 5 vols (Thessaloniki, 1966–1992). A sixth volume, containing the homilies, was added in 2015.

(⁵⁸) Ettore Perrella (ed. and trans.), *Gregorio Palamas. Atto e luce divina: Scritti filosofici e teologici* (Milan: Bompiani Il Pensiero Occidentale, 2003); Ettore Perrella (ed. and trans.), *Gregorio Palamas. Dal sovraessenziale all'essenza: Confutazioni, discussioni, scritti confessionali, documenti dalla prigionia fra i turchi* (Milan: Bompiani Il Pensiero Occidentale, 2005); Ettore Perrella (ed. and trans.), *Gregorio Palamas. Che cos'è l'Ortodossia: Capitoli, scritti ascetici, lettere, omelie* (Milan: Bompiani Il Pensiero Occidentale, 2006): henceforth Perrella I, II, and III.

(⁵⁹) On how one could be a Palamite without denigrating profane wisdom, see Marie-Hélène Congourdeau, 'Nicolas Cabasilas et le Palamisme', in Antonio Rigo (ed.), *Gregorio Palamas e oltre: Studi e documenti sulle controversie teologiche del XIV secolo bizantino* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2004), 191–210.

(⁶⁰) Evagrius Ponticus, *De oratione* 60 (PG 79, 1180).

(⁶¹) In Greek the verbs 'to see' (ἰδεῖν) and 'to know' (εἶδεναι) are closely related etymologically.

(⁶²) Moreover, the anti-Palamite George of Pelagonia claims that Andronikos III had tried to protect Barlaam (Ioannis Polemis [ed.], *Theologica varia inedita saeculi XIV*, CCSG 76 [Turnhout: Brepols, 2012], xxix, n. 49). This is not at all unlikely, despite the emperor's disagreement with his theological opinions, in view of the important diplomatic missions that Barlaam had undertaken for him.

(⁶³) This was the acrimonious dispute which began at the end of 1331 over whether the saints enjoyed the beatific vision immediately after death or whether they had to wait until the Last Judgement. Pope John XXII, who favoured the latter view, allowed the controversy to continue until his successor, Benedict XII, ended it in 1336 with the dogmatic constitution *Benedictus Deus*, which condemned the doctrine of the deferral of the beatific vision.

(⁶⁴) Some scholars (such as Torstein Tollefsen) prefer to translate ἐνέργεια in all contexts as 'activity', 'operation', or 'actuality' on the grounds that 'energy' might give the impression that *energeia* is 'a kind of quasi-material force almost flowing into the human recipient' (Torstein Theodor Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012], 4–5, 186). Others (such as David Bradshaw) are more inclined in theological contexts to translate ἐνέργεια as 'energy' because 'the divine *energeiai* are not merely operations, but God Himself as manifested within creation' (David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 174). I am persuaded by Bradshaw that 'energies' renders the sense of ἐνέργεια more adequately than 'activities' in theological contexts. The energies are more than 'activities' but not independent forces or entities.

(⁶⁵) Polemis has presented persuasive arguments for regarding Nikephoros Blemmydes as an additional source. See Ioannis D. Polemis, 'Nikephoros Blemmydes and Gregorios Palamas', in Rigo, *Gregorio Palamas e oltre*, 179–89.

(⁶⁶) *My Life's Journey: The Memoirs of Metropolitan Evlogy As Put Together according to His Accounts by T. Manukhin*, trans. Alexander Lisenko (Yonkers, New York: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2014), ii, 513.

Part I

**The Historical Reception of Palamite
Theology**

The Orthodox struggle to assimilate Palamite thinking

The Palamite Controversy preoccupied the Byzantine Church for much of the fourteenth century. Subsequently, it ceased to be a burning issue, but it was never forgotten, particularly in monastic circles. At the Council of Florence it was deliberately kept out of sight, but in the course of the seventeenth century it surfaced again in the context of Catholic–Orthodox rivalry, as the aggressively self-confident Church of the Catholic Counter-Reform sought to expand its influence in the Russian and Ottoman empires. Knowledge of Palamas, however, even though promoted by Greeks such as the patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem and the monk Nikodemos the Hagiorite through the exploitation of the new opportunities offered by the printing press, penetrated the Orthodox world very slowly. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the materials had been assembled, principally in Russia, for a fruitful re-engagement with Palamas and with the controversy that bears his name.

The Origins of the Palamite Controversy

In the early fourteenth century there were two outstanding hesychasts on Mount Athos, Gregory the Sinaite and Gregory Palamas.¹ We do not know if they ever met although their presence on the Holy Mountain coincided from 1320, when Palamas entered Vatopedi briefly before settling at the Lavra, to around 1326, when they both left Athos owing to Turkish incursions. The Sinaite eventually founded the monastery of Paroria in Bulgarian territory, whereas in about 1331 Palamas returned to Athos. As hesychasts, they were both committed to pursuing the contemplative life through the practice of noetic prayer with the (p.22) goal of attaining union with God conceived of as deification, a participation in God's divinity that can begin even in this life. Although the Sinaite had his critics, his orthodoxy was never challenged. Palamas, however, was attacked in 1340 by the Calabrian monk Barlaam of Seminara (c.1290–1348) on the grounds that his profession of hesychasm was only a cover for Messalianism.² Palamas' defence of hesychasm against Barlaam led him to develop a new terminology centred on a distinction in God between his essence and his energies. This attempt to give hesychasm a philosophical and theological rationale has been dubbed 'Palamism' by its modern critics.³ Palamas' teaching, however, was upheld as fully orthodox by a series of Constantinopolitan councils from 1341 to 1368. Nonetheless, it continued to be opposed by an articulate minority in Constantinople until the end of the century.⁴

Gregory Palamas did not profess to be a philosopher, although Philotheos Kokkinos tells us that in his youth he had acquired an excellent knowledge of Aristotle.⁵ Barlaam, by contrast, often referred to by Palamas as 'the philosopher', clearly possessed a high level of technical competence.⁶ He was a Neoplatonist whose familiarity with Syrianus and Proclus provided him, as recent research has shown, with the conceptual framework for holding that philosophy and (p.23) theology were twin paths leading to the same truth.⁷ Plato and Aristotle were not for Barlaam, as they were for Palamas, teachers of 'outer' wisdom of secondary importance to the teachers of 'inner' wisdom, the Church Fathers. They were indispensable ancient authorities who were not only able to teach us how to construct valid rational arguments but also, like the Fathers, had gained knowledge by divine illumination.⁸ The arguments of the Fathers were to be judged by the rational standards that they had established. Palamas, of course, did use philosophical arguments but in a heuristic rather than a systematic fashion. His first mention of divine energies was in his *Second*

Letter to Barlaam (dating from 1337), in which he appealed to St Basil the Great as a patristic witness to the idea that created beings participate in names or realities such as the wise, the good, light, and life which are ‘around God’ and therefore divine but are not the substance of God, because God, as ineffable and inconceivable, is beyond every name and reality.⁹ According to Basil, such names or realities are divine operations or ‘energies’. On the basis of these early remarks Palamas went on to develop a distinction (first set out in his *Third Triad* of 1340) between God’s essence, which is inaccessible to us, and his energies, in which we can participate. Barlaam denounced this distinction as ditheism, maintaining that Palamas’ ideas resulted in two uncreated divinities: a higher imparticipable one and a lower participable one.¹⁰ Palamas vigorously denied that the essence–energies distinction entailed two or more divinities. At the synod of 1351, the distinction was subjected to close examination and found to be consistent with patristic teaching. Yet the accusation stuck. Many of those who remained dissatisfied with Palamas’ teaching on essence and energies felt themselves alienated from Orthodoxy by its official endorsement. A number of them (beginning with Demetrios Kydones and some other notables around 1357) became Roman Catholics, turning what had hitherto been an internal Orthodox debate into a further point of difference between Latin and Greek theology.

The Palamite Tradition after the Death of Palamas

(p.24) By the end of the fourteenth century, Palamism had become entrenched in the monastic tradition, particularly after its official status was confirmed again emphatically in 1368 with the proclamation of Gregory Palamas as a saint. Defenders of Palamite theology became increasingly hard line in response to continued opposition especially from Greeks such as Manuel Kalekas (d. 1410) and the Chrysoberges brothers, Maximos (d. c.1425) and Andrew (d. 1451), who became Latin Catholics and entered the Dominican Order. Among the Palamites, one of the most intransigent was Mark Eugenikos (c.1392–1445); he wrote a vast work against Kalekas on essence and energies in which he takes issue with Aquinas for claiming that we can only know the divine attributes through their created effects.¹¹ Eugenikos also discusses the vision of the divine light, and the reception of the gifts of the Spirit, but for him the outstanding feature of Orthodox theology is the essence–energies distinction.

At the council held in Ferrara and Florence in 1438–1439 in a last supreme effort to achieve a real union between the Eastern and the Western Churches while there was still some hope of halting the Turkish advance, Mark Eugenikos, now metropolitan of Ephesus, was one of the two chief spokesmen on the Greek side.¹² In March 1439, he wanted to pursue the topic of essence and energies in the official discussions, but John VIII prevented him from doing so.¹³ The emperor clearly thought that focusing attention on Palamite theology would scupper any chance of union. Three months later, as the council was nearing agreement, Pope Eugenius himself raised the subject of essence and energies with a Greek delegation that came to see him about dogmatic differences that remained to be settled. The Greeks refused to discuss the matter, saying they had no authorization to do so.¹⁴ The Latins were well aware that the Greeks held Palamite views that needed to be examined, but did not press the matter.¹⁵ Indeed, they were even willing to go some way to accommodate **(p.25)** aspects of what they took to be Palamite teaching. For example, in the ‘debriefing’ which he gave to the Latin participants after the end of the council, Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1398–1444) explained that ‘the subject of purgatory was not debated in public but between some

delegates and very seriously, and because there seemed to be so many difficulties I almost despaired'.¹⁶ The Latin delegates did eventually win assent to their doctrine.

But the Greeks [Cesarini goes on to say] were holding that they do not see God himself, but certain lights, and in this there was great difficulty and such as nearly upset the whole business; at length they yielded to argument and recognised that the souls of the blessed will see God, Three and One, as he is; but they wanted to have put into the *cedula* that some would see less and others more, and it was thought good that this should be included, since 'in our Father's house there are many mansions'.¹⁷

With his citing of the dominical saying on many mansions (John 14:2), Cesarini appears to concede the legitimacy of a certain degree of theological pluralism. This was not a stance, however, that survived the failure of the union proclaimed at Florence.

The Palamite Controversy in the Early Modern Age

Palamism had been too sensitive a subject to be discussed publicly at Florence. After the council it faded into the background, but never entirely out of sight.¹⁸ Damaskenos Stoudites (d. 1577), metropolitan of Naupactus and Arta, published in about 1570 a collection of popular sermons, in one of which he expounds the Transfiguration in the Palamite style.¹⁹ In the seventeenth century, in the context (p.26) of increasing tension between Catholics and Orthodox as a result of Jesuit missionary activity in the Ottoman Empire, Palamism came to the fore again. Works surviving in contemporary manuscripts include a syllogistic proof of the divine energies as bestowers of grace by Nikephoros Melissenos (d. 1635), bishop of Naxos (an island with a large Roman Catholic community);²⁰ a treatise on the light of Tabor from a Palamite perspective by George Koressios (c.1570–1659/60), a doctor and a leading lay theologian and polemicist of the period;²¹ and a treatise on the divine essence and its operations by Sebastos Kymenites (1630–1702), another lay theologian who after serving as Grand Dragoman of the Sublime Porte became a professor at the Greek Academy of Bucharest.²² Greek theological works of the seventeenth century, although not numerous, show that Palamite theology remained a strong current in Orthodox thought.

On the Latin side, the French Jesuit scholar Denys Petau (Dionysius Petavius) (1583–1652) and the Catholic Greek layman, Leon Alatzes (Leo Allatius) (c.1586–1669) were the first to discuss Palamite theology in printed works. In the first volume of his monumental *Dogmatic Theology*, published in Paris in 1644, Petau dismisses Palamas' essence–energies distinction as a heretical idea borrowed from Platonism.²³ Four years later Allatius, a Greek from Chios with a post at the Vatican Library that gave him access to its unrivalled collection of Greek manuscripts, became the first to offer a documented historical account of the Palamite controversy.²⁴ Allatius devotes thirty-seven columns to it in his great survey of relations between the Latin and Greek Churches, the *De perpetua consensione*, published in 'Cologne' (actually, in Amsterdam) in 1648.²⁵ He printed the text for the first time of a number of documents hostile to Palamas, including the Tome of the anti-Palamite council of 1347, to allow the reader, as he says, to see that Palamas was convicted of many errors and heresies by the Greeks themselves.²⁶ Allatius' learned work was followed ten years later by a popular piece by a Jesuit author that caused a considerable stir in the Ottoman (p.27) Empire. This was François Richard's *Targa*, which attacked Palamas in the Greek vernacular—to the fury of the Orthodox bishops—as the author of heresy.²⁷

It was in response to Allatius, the *Targa*, and other hostile treatments of Palamism in Western publications that the patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem established a Greek press for the first time on Ottoman territory (at Jassy in the Danubian principality of Moldavia) and embarked on an ambitious series of publications with the specific aim of countering Western propaganda.²⁸ In one of these publications, the *Tome of Love* (Jassy, 1698), he assembles a large number of Palamite texts, ranging from Philotheos Kokkinos' massive *Antirrhetics against Gregoras* to a brief letter which a group of metropolitans addressed to the empress Anna in 1346 calling for the deposition of the patriarch John Kalekas.²⁹ In an introduction of over a hundred pages, Dositheos also presents a detailed history of the hesychast controversy from the Palamite point of view. By the end of the century, largely as a result of his labours, Palamism once again became the subject of debate among intellectuals in the Greek-speaking world.³⁰ In 1696, for example, a dispute about the nature of the distinction between the divine essence and the divine energies broke out at Ioannina between Georgios Sougdoures (1645/7–1725), the rector of the celebrated Gioumas School (supported by his predecessor, Bessarion Makres), and the metropolitan of Ioannina, Klemes (Clement). Sougdoures, who taught Aristotelian philosophy at the School, held that the distinction was purely conceptual. Klemes insisted that it was real, but he did so in a crudely materialistic fashion, comparing the relationship between the essence and the energies to that between a loaf and a stone. Dositheos was in touch with both parties and contributed to the resolution that was achieved three years later. Sougdoures was reinstated when he issued an *Apologia* admitting the reality of the distinction; the metropolitan was told to go and make a careful study of the hesychast tradition.³¹

(p.28) Despite the renewal of interest in Palamas, the *Tome of Love* contains only three short pieces by Palamas himself.³² Dositheos was conscious of this deficiency, and in the introduction to Philotheos' *Antirrhetics* announced his intention to publish a full edition of Palamas' works.³³ Up to this point only a very few of Palamas' writings had been printed. The first (and the only one to have been printed on an Orthodox initiative) was his *Against the Latins* (London, 1624), published in England because Greek printing presses were not yet permitted in the Ottoman Empire.³⁴ The then patriarch, Cyril Loukaris (1570/2–1638), had been under pressure from the Jesuits in Constantinople because of his Calvinist leanings. Eager to counter their influence, he sent the manuscript, along with an anti-Latin treatise by Gennadios Scholarios, to a Greek merchant in London, Nikodemos Metaxas, who was collaborating with a London printer to publish books in Greek. The remaining works by Palamas to appear in print before the three included in the *Tome of Love* were published by (or at the instigation of) the great Dominican patristics scholar, François Combéfis (1605–1679).³⁵ Combéfis came across a codex containing Palamas' homilies and some of his other writings in 1655 when he was carrying out research in the library of Cardinal Mazarin in Paris.³⁶ One of the works in the codex was Palamas' *Life of Peter the Athonite*. Combéfis drew this to the attention of Jean Bolland, the founder of the Bollandists, with the result that it was subsequently included in the second volume for June of the *Acta Sanctorum*. Much later, in 1672, Combéfis published Palamas' two homilies on the Transfiguration (Homilies 34 and 35) from the same codex along with his *Confession of Faith*, the Synodal Tome of 1351, and some anti-Palamite works by John Kyparissiotis (c.1310–1378), who had been a student of Gregoras, and Manuel Kalekas.³⁷ Thanks largely to Combéfis, the first seeds of a scholarly interest in Palamas (even if strongly hostile to him) were planted in the West.³⁸

(p.29) Although Dositheos was able to set up a Greek press at Jassy, he was convinced that he needed a more secure centre with better facilities for a project of the size of the edition of Palamas that he was contemplating. The place he chose was Moscow. The four manuscripts

he sent there have been identified among the holdings of Moscow's Synodal Library.³⁹ The first, which contains Palamas' *Triads*, *Antirrhetics against Gregoras*, and *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* besides a selection of his letters and various Palamite works from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, had belonged to Metropolitan Neophytos of Thessaloniki (1680–1686). The second, which contains the *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* and some further letters, had been copied in 1607 at Halki's Hagia Triada monastery.⁴⁰ The third was a collection of shorter works copied by Maximos Margounios (c.1549–1602) at the end of the previous century. The fourth, containing *Theophanes* and texts connected with Palamas' dispute with Gregoras, corresponds in its contents to another manuscript, now in Athens, which bears the inscription 'For the use of Dositheos, patriarch of Jerusalem, 1672'. The planned edition, however, came to nothing. 'For reasons unknown to us,' says Rigo, 'these ambitious publishing projects of the patriarch of Jerusalem failed and Palamas' works remained buried among the codices of the Synodal Library.'⁴¹

Palamite Theology in the Age of the Enlightenment

In the following century, Palamism was officially endorsed again when a synod held in Constantinople in 1727 solemnly declared it to be the teaching of the Church.⁴² At this time the principles of the Enlightenment were beginning to penetrate Greek intellectual culture. Some prominent figures of the Greek Enlightenment, taking their cue from the French Encyclopaedists, were hostile to the Church. Others, like Vikentios Damodos (1700–1752) and Eugenios Boulgaris (1716–1806), although highly appreciative of Western thinkers—in (p.30) Boulgaris' case his appreciation extending even to Leibniz, Wolff, and Locke—remained faithful to Orthodoxy and its Palamite expression. In the first volume of his (unpublished) *Dogmatic Theology*, Damodos is critical of Demetrios Kydones and defends Palamas' essence–energies distinction. He has been described as the first to take up 'a "scientific" position in defence of Palamism in the Modern Greek era'.⁴³ Boulgaris published the first edition of the complete works of the Palamite polemicist, Joseph Bryennios (c.1350–1430/1) (Leipzig, 1768 and 1784) and an edition of the *Fifty-seven Chapters* of Mark Eugenikos (Saint Petersburg, 1797), yet his own chief theological work, the *Theologikon* (not published until 1872) follows the model of Latin Scholastic manuals and quotes only infrequently from Byzantine authors.⁴⁴ The way forward for Palamites in the modern age was not in the production of dogmatic manuals of this type, which were in any case heavily influenced by Western models. It lay, rather, in the recovery of the spiritual heritage of Palamas.

The recovery of this heritage called for a printed edition of Palamas' collected works, but two further attempts after Dositheos to publish such an edition also met with failure. The first of these was prepared by two brothers, otherwise unknown to us, Demetrios and Nikolaos Bachatorios. Their collection, which survives in two manuscripts, one at the Great Lavra on Mount Athos and the other at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, contains some documents pertaining specifically to the Palamite controversy, namely, the Synodal Tome of 1341, the Hagioretic Tome, and Phakrases' account of the disputation between Palamas and Gregoras, but the bulk of its material is edificatory and is intended 'for the benefit of Orthodox Christians'. It too was meant to be published, but for some reason failed to find a publisher.⁴⁵

The next project, which at the last moment also proved unsuccessful, was undertaken by Nikodemos the Hagiorite at the suggestion of Athanasios of Paros. Athanasios himself had already published in Vienna in 1784 a version in demotic Greek of the *Life of Palamas* by the Patriarch Philotheos of Constantinople.⁴⁶ In his preface, Athanasios laments that his contemporaries knew so little of a great saint who ‘apart from his ascetical struggle and angelic way of life was also a common teacher of the Church, a supreme champion of the divine dogmas, and a most fervent defender of Orthodoxy’.⁴⁷ He expresses (p.31) the hope that his readers might benefit from his work in two ways: first that they might see that Palamas’ ‘Western enemies, the profane mouths of Hades, slander and blaspheme him unjustly’, and secondly that they might be reassured that Palamas’ doctrines ‘were correct and holy’.⁴⁸ Nikodemos’ project was meant to further these aims. He sent his bulky three-volume manuscript to a Greek printer in Vienna, the brothers Poublios and Georgios Poullos. Shortly afterwards, however, in 1797, the Poullos press was closed down by the Austrian police for having published the revolutionary manifesto of Rhegas Pheraios and in consequence a large part of Nikodemos’ manuscript seems to have been destroyed.⁴⁹

In the meantime a further ten of Palamas’ homilies had been edited in 1776 by a Western scholar, Christian Friedrich von Matthaei (1744–1811).⁵⁰ Matthaei was a German New Testament scholar who came across the homilies in Moscow among the materials deposited by Dositheos of Jerusalem when he was searching for biblical manuscripts in the Library of the Holy Synod. He dedicated his volume to Eugenios Boulgaris with a brief but enthusiastic eulogy of Palamas.⁵¹ In the same year he published a work containing some of the letters of Demetrios Kydones,⁵² and later another work containing Palamas’ *Theophanes*.⁵³ Only the homilies, however, were published in Russia, and in these pastoral pieces, addressed to the ordinary faithful in Thessaloniki, there is no discussion of essence and energies.⁵⁴

In 1782 came the important publication of the *Philokalia* compiled by Makarios of Corinth and Nikodemos the Hagiorite.⁵⁵ The principle guiding the compilers was different from that which had governed Dositheos’ selection of (p.32) specifically polemical texts for the *Tome of Love*. In the *Philokalia*, Makarios and Nikodemos assemble thirty-six texts drawn from authors spanning the fourth to the fourteenth centuries to provide the reader with a unified body of teaching on the spiritual life. A number of Palamas’ writings are presented near the end of the volume, including (for the first time in print) the important work of his maturity, the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*.⁵⁶ The last third of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* (from chapter 64 onwards) is devoted to refuting the doctrines of Barlaam and Akindynos, but it does not belong to the same genre as the antirrhetic treatises of Philotheos printed by Dositheos. The aim of the *Philokalia* is to assist the reader to attain theosis (union with God without absorption into him) through ‘the interior guarding of the intellect ... the battle against passions and thoughts ... the acquisition of vigilance and stillness of heart’,⁵⁷ and the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* makes a fundamental contribution to the exposition of this theme. In the words of Kallistos Ware, although ‘only a small proportion of the *Philokalia* is devoted explicitly to the essence/energies distinction ... the basic truth that the essence/energies distinction seeks to safeguard—that God is at one and the same time totally transcendent and totally immanent—underlies the *Philokalia* from beginning to end and confers upon it an integrated coherence’.⁵⁸ The large folio volume of the *Philokalia*, however, with its difficult texts in Byzantine Greek closely printed in double columns, did not have an immediate impact on the Greek-speaking world. The intended readership, according to the compilers, was lay people as well as monastics. But it was only in the nineteenth century, with the translation of the texts into Romanian and (via Slavonic) into Russian, that the teaching of the *Philokalia* became accessible to a broad public.⁵⁹

Palamas in Nineteenth-Century Russia

(p.33) It was over a hundred years before the first Greek edition of the *Philokalia* of Makarios of Corinth and Nikodemos the Hagiorite was reprinted.⁶⁰ In the meantime, however, a Slavonic version by Paisii Velichkovsky, the *Dobrotoliubie*, was published in Moscow in 1793 and reprinted in 1822 and 1832.⁶¹ But Paisii's version does not include Gregory Palamas or the other Palamites of the Greek *Philokalia*. This does not necessarily imply a deliberate omission. Paisii was on Mount Athos collecting and translating texts before the work of Makarios and Nikodemos. There appear to have been earlier 'philokalic' collections on which both the Greek compilers and Paisii drew independently. Yet although Paisii had access to the printed Greek *Philokalia*, and may even have checked his version against it, he did not see fit to make room for Palamas. When Theophan the Recluse (1815–1894) made his expanded Russian translation towards the end of the nineteenth century, he did restore some of the Palamite texts but not Palamas' *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* or the *Hagioritic Tome* on the grounds that 'in them there is much that is difficult to express and to understand'.⁶² Clearly neither Paisii nor Theophan found the Palamite approach to the mystical life particularly helpful. A sympathetic appropriation of Palamas did not occur in Russia through the *Dobrotoliubie*. So how did it occur?

It is asserted by Nikephoros Gregoras that when Theognostos of Kiev (metropolitan 1328–1353) received official copies of the Synodal Tomes of 1347 and 1351, he rejected them as full of 'Hellenic polytheism'.⁶³ The first official recognition of Palamas in Russia was due to Kiprian of Kiev and All Russia (metropolitan 1375–1406).⁶⁴ It is noteworthy, however, that although Kiprian, a monk of Bulgarian origin, had received some of his monastic formation on Mount Athos and was a confidant (οἰκεῖος καλόγηρος) of Philotheos of Constantinople, who had entrusted him with diplomatic missions to the principality of Moscow and the grand duchy of Lithuania and had consecrated him metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia, he appears to have been rather reserved towards Palamite theology. It is true that he had the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* (the list of anathematized heretics that is read out on the first Sunday of Lent) (p.34) updated to include Barlaam and Akindynos, but this is likely simply to have reflected his personal loyalty to Philotheos, the author of the Tome of 1351.⁶⁵ His first spiritual father was Theodosius of Tŭrnovo, who had been a disciple of Gregory the Sinaite at Paroria. His favourite spiritual work was John Climacus' *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, of which we possess a Slavonic translation in his own hand. His monastic outlook had been formed in the Sinaite rather than the Palamite tradition.

In the succeeding centuries the spiritual culture of Russian hesychasm follows in the same mould. The texts translated into Slavonic in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for use of the monks of St Sergius' Trinity Lavra and St Cyril's monastery at Beloozero include St Isaac of Nineveh, St Symeon the New Theologian, and St Gregory the Sinaite, but not St Gregory Palamas. Some works of the Palamite apologist, David Dishypatos, were translated, but the only works of Palamas himself that were made available in Russia at this time were his two treatises *Against the Latins* and his account of his debate with the Chionai (a Jewish group converted to Islam) held in 1355 when Palamas was a prisoner of the Turks.⁶⁶ The Russian hesychast tradition, whose chief representative in the fifteenth century was St Nil Sorskii, had no knowledge of Palamas. Moreover, hesychasm as a whole was marginalized in Russian monastic life after the defeat at the Russian Church Council of 1503 of the Non-possessors (who opposed the owning of land by monasteries on the grounds that it was inimical to the interior life) by the Possessors (who argued that an assured income from land

holdings enabled the monasteries to carry out effective apostolic work).⁶⁷ Even after the revival of hesychasm in the nineteenth century, Palamas remained almost unknown. St Theophan the Recluse, writing to a correspondent on the light of Tabor, says: ‘The controversy about it arose during the time of Gregory Palamas; it is hard to determine what the essence of the matter was.’⁶⁸ The nineteenth-century flowering of hesychast life in Russia at Optina and elsewhere, with its emphasis on the Jesus Prayer and *starchestvo* (spiritual eldership), owed very little, if anything, to Palamas.

In the seminaries and academies (where teaching was still in Latin in the early decades of the nineteenth century) the appointed textbooks were dominated by a scholastic outlook that knew nothing of Palamism. Widely used manuals of dogmatic theology, such as those of Makarii Bulgakov (1816–1882) and (p.35) Antonii Amfiteatrov (1815–1879), denied that there was any real distinction between God and his attributes.⁶⁹ By the 1850s, however, there were signs of the recovery of the hesychast tradition. In his *Great Catechism*, Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov) of Moscow (1783–1867) teaches that the divine essence lies beyond human knowledge, that the saints attain beatitude through contemplating the light and glory of God, and that their bodies at the Resurrection will be transfigured like that of Christ on Mount Tabor. Filaret Gumilevskii (1805–1866), rector of the Moscow Theological Academy and at his death archbishop of Chernigov, addresses the hesychast controversy directly in his *Dogmatics*, but according to Jugie ‘expresses himself obscurely on essence and energies and does not seem to have grasped the problem’.⁷⁰ The ‘problem’ for Jugie, of course, was that by making a distinction between essence and energies Palamas was compromising the unity of God. No Orthodox was going to admit that Palamas was a heretic, even if some did come very close to doing so.⁷¹ Yet accurate information on him was difficult to come by.⁷² This was a situation deplored in 1860 by Igumen (later Bishop) Modest Strelbitsky in the first monograph on Palamas to be published in Russia (or anywhere else, for that matter): St Gregory Palamas is one of the greatest ascetics of Christian piety, teachers, and zealous defenders of the Greek Church in the struggle against Papism for Orthodoxy and its independence. Yet this Church Father’s great monastic struggles, his (p.36) unwavering zeal for Orthodoxy against the Western Church, comparable to the zeal of Photios and Michael Keroularios, and many of his works—in many respects beneficial to the theologian—do not, unfortunately, enjoy recognition among the enlightened sons of the Orthodox Church to this day. One can say that not a single defender of the faith and piety of the Greek Orthodox Church has endured as many slanders and unjust accusations of deviation from Orthodoxy and the rules of asceticism as St Gregory Palamas. Not only his contemporaries in the West, but even Eastern historians and theologians, strove to obscure the height of the struggles of this holy man, and find in his works many heresies as the result of the departure of the Eastern Church from unity with the Western Church. In the most recent times, even in certain widely used anthologies in our Fatherland, St Gregory Palamas and those with him have received the name of a sect known as ‘Palamites’ or ‘Hesychasts’, which had its beginning, as it were, in the eleventh century. It goes without saying that such views of historians and theologians, especially of Western ones, about the deeds and teaching of the holy Palamas not only concern him alone but in his person stain the Orthodoxy of the entire Eastern Church (of the fourteenth century), of which he was the primary defender.⁷³

Strelbitsky exaggerates when he makes Palamas a champion of anti-Latin polemics in the same league as Photios and Michael Keroularios. But he represents accurately contemporary attitudes to Palamas in Russia and the West. A few years before his monograph (in 1856–1857) all the works of Palamas and his contemporaries that had previously appeared in print had been collected and reprinted by the Abbé Jacques-Paul Migne (1800–1875) in the *Patrologia Graeca*. In the *Monitum* that precedes the texts, Migne says that initially he

had decided to exclude Palamas but had changed his mind for three reasons: firstly because ‘the heresy of the Palamites has already self-destructed several centuries ago on account of its absurdity’; secondly because by presenting ‘this miserable heresy’ he was celebrating the (Roman Catholic) Church’s triumph over it; thirdly, and most importantly, because his learned mentor had persuaded him that Palamas ought to be included.⁷⁴ Migne’s publication of Palamas, even if reluctantly done, was a great boon to the Orthodox, for it made a number of his texts easily accessible for the first time in the libraries of academies and universities.

As for the ‘widely used anthologies’ that Strelbitsky mentions, it is not entirely clear what he is referring to. Perhaps he means the Slavonic version of the (p.37) *Philokalia*—the Russian version not yet being available—which omits Palamas. At all events, the hesychasts, with Palamas, in Strelbitsky’s view, as their most representative teacher, had been marginalized and it was time that this situation was remedied, especially as the promotion of Palamas could strengthen the Eastern Church’s hand in its struggle with the Catholic West.

During the remainder of the nineteenth century, the most valuable work on Palamas in Russia was done by historians rather than theologians. Two scholars in particular made outstanding contributions: Bishop Porfyrii (Uspensky) and Feodor Ivanovich Uspensky. Bishop Porfyrii made several extended visits to Mount Athos between 1845 and 1861, and these resulted in two massive works describing his travels and a four-volume history of Mount Athos.⁷⁵ Feodor Uspensky, a distinguished Byzantinist who became a professor at Odessa’s Novorossiia University in 1879 and from 1915 until his death in 1928 edited the journal *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* [Byzantine Chronicle], published the text of the Palamite additions to the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* (which, although inserted by Kiprian of Kiev and All Russia, had been removed in the latter part of the eighteenth century under Catherine II) and a pioneering study of the hesychast controversy.⁷⁶ By the end of the century, even if only a limited number of Palamas’ writings had been published, sufficient materials were available in Russia for an informed assessment of Palamite thought.⁷⁷

The *Imiaslavie* Controversy

In reality, however, these materials were consulted chiefly by academic specialists. Churchmen in general were rather poorly informed about St Gregory Palamas, (p.38) especially his theology, as is illustrated by the controversy that broke out in 1912 over the glorification of the Divine Name (*imiaslavie*).⁷⁸ The controversy began with the publication of a book in 1907 by a monk, formerly of Mount Athos, called Ilarion, under the title *Na gorakh Kavkaza* [In the Mountains of the Caucasus]. The book was initially well received and was reprinted twice within three years.⁷⁹ In 1912, however, it was the subject of a hostile review in the journal *Russkii Inok* [Russian Monk].⁸⁰ As an exposition of the Jesus Prayer (‘Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me a sinner’), it should not have given any cause for complaint. But it contained the statement, ‘Jesus Christ’s name is he himself our divine Saviour Jesus Christ’,⁸¹ and it was this that shocked the reviewer, drawing from him an accusation of pantheism and Christological heresy. A monk of the Russian skete of St Andrew on Mount Athos, Fr Antonii Bulatovich, wrote to Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitsky) of Volynia, who directed *Russkii Inok*, to protest against the review, with the request that his letter should be published. Not only was it not published, but Archbishop Antonii himself published a statement in the journal in May 1912 denouncing the author of the book, and followed this up in August with another statement in which he compares the glorifiers of the Divine Name, the *imiaslavtsy*, to the heretical sectarians known as *khlysty*. In

September, Fr Bulatovich lodged a complaint against Archbishop Antonii with the Holy Synod. The issue came to a head in January 1913, when the *imiaslavtsy* of the Russian skete of St Andrew on Mount Athos drove their opponents out of the monastery. Their action and their teaching were both condemned in May 1913 by the Russian Holy Synod and by (p.39) the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Fr Bulatovich then issued an *Apologia*, published by Mikhail Aleksandrovich Novoselov (a former disciple of Lev Tolstoy but now zealously Orthodox), in which he defended the teaching of the *imiaslavtsy*, but he failed to persuade the Holy Synod.⁸² In the summer of 1913, a Russian naval vessel forcibly removed 800 or so recalcitrant *imiaslavtsy* from Mount Athos and returned them to Russia for disciplinary action.

In the first of his statements published in *Russkii Inok*, Archbishop Antonii of Volynia protests against treating the name Jesus as God. After all, the Scriptures speak of Jesus, son of Nun, Jesus, son of Sirach, and Jesus, son of Josedek.⁸³ ‘Were they also gods?’ he asks.⁸⁴ In the second statement he links the teaching of the *imiaslavtsy* with the heresy of the *khlysty*, ‘which is now overtaking all of Russia like a fire’, and laments the fact that Fr Ilarion’s novel teaching about deified names, which has no support from the ancient Fathers, is infecting even the ascetics of Mount Athos.⁸⁵ This was a serious charge which could not be ignored.

The formal complaint which Fr Antonii Bulatovich promptly sent to the Over-procurator of the Holy Synod strongly defends the *imiaslavtsy* against the charges of pantheism and *khlystovstva*, and accuses Archbishop Antonii of injustice, slander, and blasphemy.⁸⁶ The *Apologia* which Fr Bulatovich produced in support of his complaint appeals to the teaching of St Gregory Palamas and quotes from the anathemas against Barlaam in the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*. (Bulatovich makes his own translation from the Greek, because these anathemas, as already noted, were absent from the Slavonic version.) He outlines the Palamite distinction between essence and energies, emphasizing that the acceptance of this distinction is fundamental for understanding *imiaslavie*. The Church recognizes the visible light of Tabor as a divine operation or energy and therefore (p.40) as God. The name of Jesus, he argues, because revealed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 9:35), ‘is also God himself as the verbal operation of God’. Equally divine is all the truth revealed by the Holy Spirit, even the liturgical prayers of the Church, ‘for they are the verbal operations of God’.⁸⁷

Archbishop Antonii returned to the attack in a long article published in a supplement to *Tserkovnii vedomosti* [Church Gazette].⁸⁸ He has no quarrel with the Jesus Prayer, but the Jesus Prayer, he says, has no need of superstitious arguments to support it. He reveals his fear, however, that the undisciplined practice of the Jesus Prayer encourages monks to neglect the daily offices and their obedience to the rule. Fr Ilarion, in his view, disparages liturgical prayer. It is a ‘charismatic’ freedom of this kind that assimilates monks who surrender to it to the *khlysty*. A large part of his article is devoted to examining Bulatovich’s patristic arguments and finding them wanting. In particular, Bulatovich, in his view, distorts St Gregory Palamas. Even if the Name of Jesus can be considered a divine energy (which the archbishop does not concede), it is not ‘God’, according to Palamas, but ‘divinity’, not *theos* but *theotēta*. Archbishop Antonii concludes by urging Bulatovich and his followers to abandon their error and show themselves to be repentant sons of their heavenly Father.

The *imiaslavie* controversy highlights what Florovsky has described as ‘the strange gulf [in the history of Russian theology] separating theology and piety, theological learning and devotional prayer, the theology of the schools and the life of the Church’.⁸⁹ Those educated monks who opposed the *imiaslavtsy* were all, like Khrapovitsky himself, graduates of the

theological academies. Bulatovich, who had embraced the monastic life after a distinguished military career,⁹⁰ had not been formed in the same scholastic and moralistic tradition. His early spiritual mentor had been St John of Kronstadt, himself a proponent of the divinity of the name of God. Bulatovich was much closer than most of his peers to the traditional piety of the peasant monks who prayed the Jesus Prayer and had no problem with glorifying the holy name.

The *imiaslavtsy*, however, did not lack defenders from among the leaders of the ‘Russian religious renaissance’. Pavel Florensky (1882–1937), who regarded the fourteenth-century hesychast debates on the Light of Tabor as having ‘clarified the foundations of Orthodox epistemology and the very significant aspects of Orthodox ontology’,⁹¹ was convinced that the Name of Christ brought people (p.41) into communion with Christ’s grace-giving power and transformed them into a new spiritual essence, divinizing them within an ecclesial context: ‘*the Name of Christ is the mystical Church!*’⁹² The *imiaslavtsy* were therefore fully within the Church’s mystical tradition. Convinced of this, Florensky wrote an anonymous preface for Bulatovich’s *Apologia*. But he was unhappy about the Athonite’s militancy. It seemed to him that Bulatovich had ‘stripped Ilarion’s thought, that ancient thought, of its sacred cloak of mystery’ in a misguided effort to adapt ‘the doctrine of the Name to the mentality of the Intelligentsia’.⁹³

Florensky was supported in his defence of the *imiaslavtsy* by his friend, Sergius Bulgakov. Writing in 1916, Bulgakov insists that the *naming* of God lies at the heart of prayer:

The Name of God is as it were the intersection of two worlds, the transcendent in the immanent, and hence beside its common theological sense ‘name-worship’ is in a certain manner the transcendental condition of prayer that constitutes the possibility of religious experience. For God is known experientially through prayer, the heart of which is the invocation of the Transcendent, *naming* him, and he seemingly confirms this naming, acknowledges the name as his, not by simply responding to it but by being really present in it.⁹⁴

For Bulgakov, the naming of God is the most important element of the Jesus Prayer, which is ‘the unceasing striving towards the transcendent Divinity by immanent consciousness’.⁹⁵ Bulgakov himself did not publish anything on behalf of the *imiaslavtsy* at the time of the controversy apart from his comments in *Unfading Light*.⁹⁶ Other members of the intelligentsia, however, did protest strongly against the Holy Synod’s condemnation in various pamphlets and articles. One of the most eloquent of these protests was written by the religious philosopher Vladimir Ern (1882–1917).

In 1917, Ern published an essay analysing the official epistle issued by the Holy Synod of May 1913.⁹⁷ ‘The Synod’s *Epistle on the Name of God*,’ he said, (p.42) ‘touches the innermost point of the Orthodox conscience in the most profound manner and cannot be passed by in silence.’⁹⁸ He criticizes the Synod for its lack of engagement with theological issues. Without allowing for any broader discussion, it simply imposed an administrative solution in an authoritarian manner. ‘What was needed,’ he goes on to say, ‘was to *show* the true ecclesial attitude to the Name of God, that is, to uncover it effectively and plainly in word and reason and, as it were, to “show” its “verbal icon” to the faithful.’⁹⁹ What most disturbs Ern is the thoroughly subjectivist view of prayer set out in the *Epistle*.¹⁰⁰ Prayer is described therein as a ‘phenomenon particular to our consciousness’ rather than an activity that leads us to real communion with God. Such subjective pietism is destructive of faith: ‘If there is no going “from oneself” and forgetting of oneself, *there is no prayer*.’¹⁰¹ The true Christian teaching on prayer is preserved by those humble Athonite monks who have

protested against ‘the spiritual hibernation around them’, not by those who, like the Holy Synod, accuse them of ‘magical superstition’. The Name of God is a divine energy. In a profoundly Palamite manner, Ern declares:

If the name of God is revealed to us by God, then this primarily means that the Name of God is not one of the many *givens* of our consciousness, but an *unconditional gift from above*, opening our consciousness not as something belonging to it and owned by it, but as a kind of inconceivable and unforeseen *action* of Divine generosity, *bursting* the darkness of its empirical *condition* by the ineffable and substantial light of the very Godhead. But God’s actions are Divine in themselves, which means that the Name of God, revealing God and taken in itself, cannot have anything in common with the *defective*, sinful human thinking that nominalism tried to perpetuate and deify. The Name of God, revealed by God Himself, is God’s covenant to man and with creation, and God’s covenant with man (Old and New) is God’s revelation to man, accomplished by God Himself, and therefore the Name of God is equivalent and of equal value to God’s revelation, for God is revealed in His Name, and is truly and authentically named only in His revelation.¹⁰²

In Ern’s view, the *imiaslavie* controversy was in some respects a replay of the old debate between nominalists and realists.¹⁰³ But his plea fell on deaf ears. In 1914, (p.43) the Holy Synod condemned the *imiaslavtsy*—without excommunicating them, however. The issue was to have been decided definitively at the All-Russia Council of 1917, but the Bolshevik Revolution brought proceedings to a premature close before the matter could be discussed.

Palamas at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

The ‘long nineteenth century’ thus drew to a close with Palamas at the centre of a new controversy, this time on the implications of prayer. The *imiaslavie* controversy brought to the fore again an old fault line within Orthodox theology between those who understood salvation as an ontological transformation of the human person and those who interpreted it primarily in moral terms. Fr Bulatovich and his supporters were enthusiastic proponents of the divinization of the Orthodox Christian in the hesychast tradition. Archbishop Antonii represents another approach which focused on keeping the monastic rule, following the commandments and remaining faithful to the liturgical and canonical traditions of the Church. For him Palamism was obscurantist, and its most exotic excrescence, that of the *imiaslavtsy*, was downright heretical.

The exodus of Russian theologians in the aftermath of the Revolution brought this unresolved debate to the West.¹⁰⁴ There it was to be overtaken by the controversy caused by Bulgakov’s teaching on Divine Sophia, but it was not forgotten. In 1937, Vladimir Lossky replied to an inquiry he received from Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), the *locum tenens* of the patriarchal throne of Moscow, with a letter in which he suggested that the dispute about the Divine Name could be resolved in the light of Palamite doctrine:

You await from me an answer concerning *imiaslavie*. I will attempt to answer your question very briefly and systematically, or more accurately—to outline only that which I would like to say (otherwise one would have to write volumes, so substantive is this theme). The (dogmatic) questions about the Divine Name, about verbal-intellectual expressions (‘symbols’) of the Divinity are as important as the question of icons. Just as then [at the time of the iconoclast controversy], the Orthodox formulation of the Truth about icons became a

‘triumph of orthodoxy’, so too now, the Orthodox teaching about names, as well as all the questions connected with it (the teaching of St Gregory Palamas, forgotten by many—grace, prayer, authentic ‘anthropology’, teaching about the mind and the heart, about the ‘inner man’ and (p.44) so on)—must lead to a new Triumph of Orthodoxy, to the appearance of new grace-filled strength and holiness.¹⁰⁵

Lossky saw the rationalism of the *imiabortsy* (the name-fighters)—with Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitsky) as a prime example—as comparable to the rationalism of the iconoclasts of the eighth century. But the extreme *imiaslavtsy* (the name-glorifiers) erred just as much in the opposite direction by making the flesh divine by nature. ‘This last tendency—in the broad sense—develops as sophiology, where God and creation are confused.’¹⁰⁶ The correct approach, in Lossky’s view, is that of Gregory Palamas, who can restore Orthodoxy by steering a middle path between on the one hand a rationalist exclusion of God from creation altogether and on the other a theosophical confusion of the two. It is against the background of this concern for a correct Orthodox perspective on divine–human communion that the study of Palamas was undertaken by some of the best Russian émigré theologians who came to Paris in the 1920s and 1930s—principally by Archimandrite Kiprian Kern and by Lossky himself.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ For expert overviews of the life and writings of the two Gregories, see Antonio Rigo, ‘Gregorio il Sinaita’ and Robert E. Sinkewicz, ‘Gregory Palamas’, in Conticello and Conticello, *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition II*, 35–130 and 131–88.

⁽²⁾ Messalianism was the Byzantine term for Bogomilism. The Messalians were a fourth-century sect condemned for holding that, as a result of the Fall, every human soul was united with a demon which remained after baptism and could only be driven out by ceaseless prayer. The Bogomils do not seem to have been connected with them historically. They were a dualist mediaeval sect of Manichaean origin who believed that the body was the creation of Satan, with the result that the soul, which alone was created by God, could only be released by a life of extreme asceticism.

⁽³⁾ ‘Palamism’ is a term which first appears in the early twentieth century. Palamas himself referred to his teaching simply as εὐσεβεία (‘piety’ or ‘orthodoxy’). His opponents attacked it as ‘the heresies of Palamas’ and referred to his followers as ‘Palamites’. Akindynos, with a word-play on Palamas’ name, often refers to the ‘abominable’ [or Palamnaian] impiety or error. The first modern discussion of the hesychast controversy (that of Leo Allatius, published in 1648) still uses the traditional anti-Palamite terminology and speaks of ‘Palamae heresis’ and ‘factio Palamitarum’. In this study I use ‘Palamism’ in a neutral sense to refer to the distinct features of Palamas’ teaching that aroused hostility in a number of his contemporaries.

⁽⁴⁾ For overviews from different viewpoints, see Aristeides Papadakis’ chapter, ‘The Hesychast Controversy’, in his *The Christian East and the Rise of the Papacy* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1994), 275–319; Dirk Krausmüller, ‘The Rise of Hesychasm’, in Michael Angold (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Eastern Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 101–26; Norman Russell, ‘The Hesychast Controversy’, in Anthony Kaldellis and Niketas Sinisiosoglou (eds), *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 494–508.

⁽⁵⁾ Philotheos Kokkinos, *Encomium on Gregory, Archbishop of Thessalonica* 11. We should not forget, however, that our idea of what makes a philosopher has been conditioned by the academic tradition deriving from the mediaeval Western Schools, particularly that of Paris. On the disparity of the Eastern and Western traditions in this respect, see György Geréb, 'Hidden Themes in Fourteenth-Century Byzantine and Latin Theological Debates: Monarchianism and Crypto-Dyophysitism', in Hinterberger and Schabel, *Greeks, Latins and Intellectual History*, 183–211.

⁽⁶⁾ This was recognized from the beginning by his opponents. The Synodal Tome of 1351, §2, describes him as 'steeped in Greek learning' (PG 151, 718A; Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 375).

⁽⁷⁾ Michele Trizio, '“Una è la verità che pervade ogni cosa”', 108–40. Trizio builds on the work of Fyrigos, especially his *Dalla controversia palamitica alla polemica esicastica*, which gives the best overview of Barlaam's life and work. Meyendorff's account of Barlaam ('Un mauvais théologien de l'unité au XIVe siècle', in *1054–1954: L'Eglise et les Eglises*, II [Chevetogne, 1954], reprinted in John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm: historical, theological and social problems* [London: Variorum, 1974], Study V) is unsatisfactory. As Romanides first pointed out ('Notes on the Palamite Controversy and Related Topics', *GOTR* 6 [1960–1], 186–205; 9 [1963–4], 225–7), Barlaam could not have been, as Meyendorff would have it, both a nominalist and a Neoplatonist at the same time.

⁽⁸⁾ Barlaam of Calabria, *To Gregory Palamas*, Ep. I, 97. 843–5

⁽⁹⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 31–2 (Christou I, 278; Perrella III, 536), with reference to Basil the Great, *Letter* 235 (PG 32, 873BC; Deferrari iii, 380–2). An English translation of the key passage at the beginning of §32 is given by Sinkewicz, who comments that the nucleus of what would become Palamas' doctrine of the divine essence and energies first appears in an *epistemological* context, not in a discussion of the Divine Light or grace: 'The historical development of the controversy cannot be correctly appreciated apart from a recognition of this initial perspective' (R. E. Sinkewicz, 'The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian', *Mediaeval Studies* 44 [1982], 181–242, at 221).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 6 (Meyendorff, 'Lettre', 19. 7–8; Perrella III, 582).

⁽¹¹⁾ Partly edited by M. Pilavakis, 'On the Distinction between Essence and Energy; First Antirrhethics against Manuel Kalekas' (Doctoral dissertation, London, 1987). See also Louis Petit in *DTC* 9, 1981–3, who mentions that this work was condensed into 73 *Capita syllogistica*, which were to play a part in a later phase of anti-Western polemics through being published by Seraphim of Pisidia as an appendix to his trilingual edition of Eustratios Argenti's attack on the validity of Western baptism, Βιβλίον καλούμενον Παντισμοῦ στηλίτευσις (Leipzig, 1758), republished by W. Gass, *Die Mystik des Nikolaus Cabasilas* (Griefswald, 1849).

⁽¹²⁾ The other was Bessarion, metropolitan of Nicaea (1403–72), who remained faithful to the union proclaimed at Florence and became a Roman Cardinal.

⁽¹³⁾ Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 205–6.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Gill, *Council of Florence*, 266–7.

⁽¹⁵⁾ A correspondence between Bessarion and Andrew Chrysoberges suggests that there was some discussion of Palamite theology behind the scenes, but only between Greeks and people

on the Latin side who were native Greek-speakers. See E. Candal, ‘Andreae Rhodiensis, O.P. inedita ad Bessarionem epistula’, *OCP* 4 (1938), 329–71.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Gill, *Council of Florence*, 285, citing *Andreas de Santacroce, advocatus consistorialis: Acta Latina Concilii Florentini*, ed. G. Hoffmann (Rome, 1955), 253–6.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Cited and translated by Gill (*Council of Florence*, 285) from *Acta Latina Concilii Florentini*, 253–6. The Latin text of the bull *Laetentur coeli* of 6 July 1439 states: ‘Illorumque animas, qui post baptismum susceptum nullam omnino peccati maculam incurrerunt, illas etiam, quae post contractam peccati maculam, vel in suis corporibus, vel eisdem exutae corporibus, prout superius dictum est, sunt purgatae, in coelum mox recipi et intueri clare ipsum Deum trinum et unum, sicuti est, pro meritorum tamen diversitate alium alio perfectius (Denzinger, 693). The key expression, sicuti est (‘as he is’), is from 1 John 3:2. The phrase added to the *cedula* to satisfy the Greeks was ‘pro meritorum tamen diversitate alium alio perfectius’ (‘yet according to the diversity of merits some more perfectly than others’).

⁽¹⁸⁾ On Palamism as an element of continuity during the Tourkokratia, see Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988), 36–46. See also Martin Jugie, ‘Palamite (Controverse)’, *DTC* 11, 1810–16, which although superseded in some respects is still important.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Damaskenos Stoudites, Βιβλίον ὀνομαζόμενον θησαυρός † (Venice: Iakobos Leogkinos and Gregorios Malaxos, 1570), noted as the second edition, but see Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique*, vol. 2 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1885), 12–13, no. 151. This book, revised in the eighteenth century by Georgios Sougdoures, has frequently been reprinted, most recently in 2009 by the Hesychasterion of Katounakia, Mount Athos.

⁽²⁰⁾ For an analysis of Melissenos’s work, see E. Legrand, ‘Nicéphore Mélissène, évêque de Naxos et de Cotrone’, *Revue de l’Orient Chrétien* 8 (1903), 81–90.

⁽²¹⁾ George Koressios, Περὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ θαβορίῳ ὄρει φανείσης ἐλλάμψεως †, in Cod. Par. Gr. 1264, ff. 41v–42r. There is also a chapter on the same topic from Koressios’ *Encheiridion* which was reproduced by Dositheos of Jerusalem in his Τόμος καταλλαγῆς (Jassy, 1692), 276–410.

⁽²²⁾ Sebastos Kymenites, Περὶ διαφορᾶς θείας οὐσίας καὶ θείας ἐνεργείας κατὰ Λατίνων †, in Metoch. Panag. Taphou/Constantinople 253 (Athens).

⁽²³⁾ Dionysius Petavius, *De dogmatibus theologicis*, 3 vols. (Paris: Sébastien Cramoisy, 1644; a fourth vol. was published in 1650). Palamas is discussed in the first book of the first volume (‘On the divine essence and its properties in general’), chapters 12 and 13, and in the third book of the same volume (‘On the negative attributes of God’), chapter 5.

⁽²⁴⁾ On Allatius, see Louis Petit, ‘Allatius, Léon’, *DTC* 1, 830–3.

⁽²⁵⁾ Leo Allatius, *De Ecclesiae occidentalis atque orientalis perpetua consensione* (‘Cologne’, 1648; reprinted Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 802–39.

⁽²⁶⁾ Allatius, *De perpetua consensione*, 803–10. The text of the anti-Palamite tome, followed by Allatius’ Latin translation, was reprinted by Migne, PG 150, 877D–885A.

⁽²⁷⁾ François Richard, Τάργα τῆς πίστεως τῆς Ρωμαϊκῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν διαφένδευσιν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας (Paris: Claude Cramoisy, 1658). The Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities in

Constantinople, Smyrna and elsewhere bought up as many copies as they could lay their hands on and had them publicly burnt ; Dositheos, Ἱστορία περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις πατριαρχευσάντων, 1177, cited (with an English translation) by Norman Russell, ‘From the “Shield of Orthodoxy” to the “Tome of Joy”’, 290.

(²⁸) For Dositheos’ career, see Klaus-Peter Todt, ‘Dositheos II. von Jerusalem’; Russell, ‘From the “Shield of Orthodoxy” to the “Tome of Joy”’.

(²⁹) Dositheos of Jerusalem, Τόμος ἀγάπης κατὰ Λατίνων, (Jassy, 1698). Dositheos says in the preface that his original intention was to publish only Philotheos’ *Antirrhetics* until he came across a large volume in the Monastery of St Anastasia (on Mount Hortiatitis just outside Thessaloniki) which contained the other texts. For an analysis of these, see Todt, ‘Dositheos II. von Jerusalem’, 674–6; Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, in Antonio Rigo (ed.), *Nicodemo l’Aghiorita e la Filocalia* (Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2001), 156–8.

(³⁰) Jugie notes: ‘Il est remarquable qu’au XVIIIe siècle, à l’époque même où l’Église russe ... se détache complètement du palamisme, cette doctrine obtient un regain de vie dans l’Église grecque proprement dite’ (‘Palamite [Controverse]’, 1812).

(³¹) Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, 44–5. For a more detailed account, see P. Christou, Ἡσυχαστικαὶ ἀναζητήσεις εἰς τὰ Ἰωάννινα περὶ τὸ _____ ↑ 1700, *Kleronomia* 1 (1969), 337–54 (reprinted in Christou’s Θεολογικὰ μελετήματα, vol. 3 (Thessaloniki, 1977), 181–96.

(³²) These are the *Exposition of the impieties of Barlaam and Akindynos* (pp. 13–17), the *Hagioritic Tome* (pp. 34–9), and the *Confession of Faith* (pp. 85–8) (=Sinkewicz, ‘Gregory Palamas’, nos. 12, 4, and 16).

(³³) On this project, see Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 158–9.

(³⁴) On the history of the printing of Palamas’ works in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita e la sua edizione delle opere di Gregorio Palamas’, 165–82; Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 151–74. In 1535, the classical scholar Guillaume Morel had already published a supposed work of Palamas consisting of a dialogue between the soul and the body , but although it was not proved until 1915, this was actually the Προσωποποιΐα of Michael Choniates (1182–1204). A French translation was published in 1570 by Claude Espence of the University of Paris.

(³⁵) On Combéfis’ career and publications, see R. Coulon, ‘Combéfis, François’, *DTC* 3, 385–7.

(³⁶) The codex is now Parisinus graecus 1239 in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

(³⁷) François Combéfis, *Bibliotheca graecorum Patrum auctarium novissimum*, 2 vols (Paris, 1672). Cf. Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 154. Combéfis’ Latin translations of Kalekas and Kyparissiotis are reprinted by Migne in PG 152.

(³⁸) Like Petau, who had already dismissed ‘the ridiculous doctrines’ of Gregory Palamas in his discussion of the divine attributes in the first volume of his *De dogmatibus theologicis*, Combéfis frequently refers to ‘the errors of Palamas’ and the ‘absurdity’ of some of his ideas in his notes to his edition of the Synodal Tome of 1351 (reproduced in PG 151, 718–84).

(³⁹) These manuscripts have been identified as Mosq. Syn. Gr 237, 238, 249, and 252. For their contents, see Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 158–9.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ The Hagia Triada monastery on the island of Halki (Heybeliada) in the Sea of Marmara was destroyed at the time of the Turkish conquest but had been rebuilt by the Patriarch Metrophanes III (1565–1572, 1579–1580), who endowed it with a magnificent collection of manuscripts.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 159. The Synodal Library did not even have a catalogue until the nineteenth century.

⁽⁴²⁾ Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie*, 43. The four Eastern patriarchs issued a profession of faith addressed to all the faithful which included two Palamite articles: article 9 on the uncreated character of the divine light of Tabor, and article 10 distinguishing this uncreated light from the divine nature and prohibiting the confusion of the two; Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* 37, 901–2, cited (with a French translation) Jugie, ‘Palamite (Controverse)’, 1812–13.

⁽⁴³⁾ Yannis Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1992), 61.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ On Boulgaris as a theologian, see D. Stiernon, ‘Eugène Boulgaris’, in Conticello and Conticello, *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition II*, 782–831.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 160–2. The two manuscripts have been identified by Rigo as Athos Lavras 95 (1907) and Urbana, Bibl. Univ. 2. See also Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita e la sua edizione delle opera di Gregorio Palamas’, 174–5.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Athanasios of Paros, *Βίος ἀξιοθαύμαστος τοῦ ἁγίου Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ* ↑ (Vienna 1784); reprinted Thessaloniki 1981 (page references are to the 1981 edition).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Athanasios, *Βίος ἀξιοθαύμαστος* ↑, 21. Athanasios laments that although the people of Thessaloniki could see Palamas’ holy relics—his body lay enshrined in the then cathedral—and could tell that he must have been a great saint, they knew nothing about him.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Athanasios, *Βίος ἀξιοθαύμαστος* ↑, 23–4.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Jugie (‘Palamas, Grégoire’, *DTC* 11, 1776) informs us that the first volume of the manuscript was in fact saved and ended up eventually in the library of the Great Lavra on Athos. Nikodemos’ preface was published in the Constantinopolitan journal *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 4 (1883), 93–101.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ *Gregorii Thessalonicensis X. orationes, cum singulis Ioannis Chrysostomi et Amphilochii Iconensis. Accessit quoque fragmentum Io. Damaceni ...* Primum edidit C. F. Matthaei, etc., Moscow 1776. On this publication, see Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 160. The homilies are nos 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 26, 28, 42, and 43.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Text of the eulogy (in Greek) in Rigo, ‘Nicodemo l’Aghiorita, la “Filocalia” e Gregorio Palamas’, 160, n. 44.

⁽⁵²⁾ *Isocratis, Demetrii Cydone, et Michaelis Glycae aliquot epistolae; necnon Dionis Chrysostomi oratio περὶ λόγου ἀσκήσεως* ↑. Edidit et animadversiones adiecit C. F. Matthaei. Moscow 1776.

⁽⁵³⁾ *Lectiones Mosquenses*, Leipzig 1779, ii. 7–37. Matthaei based his editions of Palamas’ *Homilies* and *Theophanes* on the present Mosq. Syn. Gr. 212 (15th cent.).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ It is embarrassing that the first Westerner to express unqualified admiration for Palamas turns out to have been a somewhat unprincipled character. It appears that he appropriated a number of manuscripts from the (as yet uncatalogued) Synodal Library, keeping some for his personal use and selling others to university libraries in Germany and Holland. The evidence for this is given by Oscar von Gebhardt, 'Christian Friedrich Matthaei und seine Sammlung griechischer Handschriften', *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 15 (1898), 345–57, 393–420, 441–82, and 537–66.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν† (Venice: Antonios Bortoli, 1782). On the compilation of the *Philokalia*, see Kallistos Ware, 'St. Nikodimos and the *Philokalia*', in Bingaman and Nassif, *The Philokalia*, 9–35.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ The other texts are (1) a little treatise on the spiritual life addressed to the nun Xene, (2) a summary of Christian moral teaching entitled *A New Testament Decalogue*, (3) a short discourse from the first *Triad* on the hesychast method of prayer (*Triads* 1. 2), (4) a brief work entitled *Three Texts on Prayer and Purity of Heart*, and (5)—after the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*—the *Hagiorctic Tome* first published by Dositheos.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Kallistos Ware, 'St. Nikodimos and the *Philokalia*', 28.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ware, 'St. Nikodimos and the *Philokalia*', 32. Andrew Louth is much more reserved in this regard: 'While it is clearly not erroneous ... to see the *Philokalia* as occupying a standpoint that might be regarded as hesychast, and establishing a hesychast perspective, the hesychast culmination seems a little hesitant, and to regard the *Philokalia* as a whole as representing what Germans might call the *Herkunft* of Palamism or hesychasm seems unbalanced; it is not until one is two thirds the way through the *Philokalia* that the hesychast theme of the Jesus Prayer is more than alluded to, and one needs to go still further for the Palamite distinction between essence and activities' ('The influence of the *Philokalia* in the Orthodox world', in Bingaman and Nassif, *The Philokalia*, 52). Louth is right up to a point about the *Philokalia* not growing out of the root-stock (*Herkunft*) of Palamism. As we shall see below, anthologies with a similar content seem already to have existed on Mount Athos. But it is not unreasonable (or unbalanced) to hold that Makarios and Nikodemos consciously added the Palamite material (absent from Paisii Velichkovsky's version) as the culmination of the tradition exemplified by the earlier texts.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ On the dissemination of the *Philokalia* in the nineteenth century, see Ware, 'St. Nikodimos and the *Philokalia*'; Louth, 'The Influence of the *Philokalia* in the Orthodox World'.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Athens 1893. The next reprint was a five-volume edition, Athens 1957–63.

⁽⁶¹⁾ On Paisii Velichkovsky and the *Philokalia*, see Antonios-Aimilianos Tachiaos, 'La creazione della "Filocalia" e il suo influsso spirituale nel mondo greco e slavo', in Adalberto Mainardi (ed.), *Nil Sorskij e l'esicasmo* (Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 1995), 227–49; John Antony McGuckin, 'The Making of the *Philokalia*: A Tale of Monks and Manuscripts', in Bingaman and Nassif, *The Philokalia*, 39–45; Ware, 'St. Nikodimos and the *Philokalia*', 21–5.

⁽⁶²⁾ *Dobrotoliubie v Russkom Perevodie* vol. 5 (Moscow 1900; reprinted Paris 1988), 3.

⁽⁶³⁾ Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 36, 24.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ The best overview of Kiprian is Dimitri Obolensky's chapter, 'Metropolitan Cyprian of Kiev and Moscow', in his *Six Byzantine Portraits* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 173–200.

For Kiprian's hesychasm, see Gerhard Podskalsky, 'Il metropolita Cipriano di Kiev/Mosca e la comparsa dell'esicismo in Russia', in Mainardi, *Nil Sorskij*, 205–15. Cf. John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 220–60.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Podskalsky, 'Il metropolita Cipriano', 212; cf. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 259–60. Meyendorff takes the updating of the *Synodikon* (wrongly, in my opinion) to be a sign of Kiprian's commitment to the Palamite expression of hesychasm.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ See Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia*, 124–5. Meyendorff also mentions a short treatise by Palamas against Akindynos and his *Confession of Faith* translated into Slavonic in Bulgaria.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ For a succinct account of this conflict and what was at stake, see Sergei Hackel, 'Late Medieval Russia: The Possessors and the Non-Possessors', in Jill Raitt (ed.), *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 223–35.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Letter to M. M. Speranskii, cited by Samuel Nedelsky, 'Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), Imiaslavie, and Hesychasm', 22 from *Pis'ma o dukhovnoi zhizni* [Letters on the spiritual life] (Mount Athos, 1903), 221–2.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Jugie, 'Palamite (Controverse)', 1815, citing Makarii Bulgakov, *Pravoslavno-dogmaticheskoe bogoslovie* [Orthodox dogmatic theology], 4th edn (Petrograd 1883), vol. 1, 144–5, and Antonii Amfiteatrov, *Dogmaticheskoe bogoslovie* [Dogmatic theology] (St Petersburg 1849), in a Greek trans. by Vallianos, 72.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Jugie, 'Palamisme (Controverse)', 1816, commenting on Filaret Gumilevskii, *Pravoslavnoe dogmaticheskoe Bogoslovie* [Orthodox dogmatic theology], 3rd edn, Petrograd 1883, vol. 1, 36–8. Filaret is commended by Florovsky (*Ways of Russian Theology: Part One* [New York: Nordland Publishing Company, 1979], 263) as an academic theologian who helped initiate a new era free of the scholastic rationalism that had been imported from the West in the time of Peter the Great. It was on Filaret's initiative that the academy undertook an ambitious programme of translating the Fathers into Russian.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Jugie points out that M. Bulgakov draws a parallel between Palamite theology in the East and the condemned propositions of Gilbert de la Porrée in the West (Jugie, 'Palamite (Controverse)', 1815). Nedelsky has also drawn my attention to a passage in *Nastol'naia Kniga* (an officially sanctioned clergy handbook first published in 1913 and still widely used today) that could have been written by Barlaam himself. It states (in Nedelsky's translation) that the hesychasts were 'a group of monastic mystics in Greece in the fourteenth century distinguished by the very strangest reveries. They honoured the navel as the centre of spiritual energies and, consequently, the centre of contemplation; they thought that, by lowering the chin towards the chest and gazing at their navel, they would see the light of Paradise and rejoice in seeing celestial inhabitants' (entry on Hesychasm, in a section entitled 'Schisms, Heresies, Sects, etc.').

⁽⁷²⁾ A Russian translation of some of Palamas' writings had been published in Moscow in 1785 by I. V. Lopukhin under the title: *Sviatogo otsa nashego Palama [sic], arkhiepiskopa Fessalonitskago, Desiat'besed* [Ten homilies of our holy father Palamas, archbishop of Thessaloniki]. Lopukhin was a Rosicrucian at a time when the influence of mystical freemasonry in Russia was at its highest. Judging from the imprint (Tipografia I. Lopukhina),

Lopukhin published the work himself. The government suppressed the edition with the result that it was not distributed widely. See Nedelsky, ‘Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii)’, 22.

⁽⁷³⁾ *Sviatyi Grigorii Palama, mitropolit Solunskii. Pobornik pravoslavnago ucheniai o Favorskom svete i o deistviiakh*, Kiev 1860; cited and trans. Nedelsky, ‘Archbishop Antonii’, 23–4, from Kiprian Kern, *Antropologiya Sv. Grigoriia Palamy*, xix. Nedelsky reproduces the same passage in ‘Palamas in Exile’, 25–6.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ PG 151, 551–2. There is a French translation of the *Monitum* in Juan Nadal Cañellas, *La résistance d’Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), vol. 1, xvii. Nadal points out that the mentor Migne refers to was the great French patrologist, Cardinal Jean-Baptiste Pitra (1812–1889). Pitra, a monk of Solesmes, was at the time prior of St Germain, a new Solesmes foundation in Paris. In the year after the publication of Migne’s Palamas volume, Pitra went to Russia (wearing his Benedictine habit), where he spent more than seven months researching Greek manuscripts in the libraries of St Petersburg and Moscow. The fruits of this visit were his two-volume *Juris ecclesiastici Graecorum historia monumenta* (Rome, 1864–1868).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ *Istoriia Afona* [History of Athos], three parts in four volumes: Parts I to III, 1, Kiev 1877; Part III, 2, Saint Petersburg 1892 (Hesychast doctrine is discussed in Part III, 1, pp. 134–44, and in Part III, 2, Ch. 18). *Pervoe puteshestvie v Afonskie monastyri i skity* [First journey to the Athonite monasteries and sketes], vols 1–3, Kiev 1877; vols 4 and 5, Moscow 1880–1881. *Vtoroe puteshestvie po sviatoi gore Afonskoi* [Second journey to the holy mountain of Athos], Moscow 1880.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ *Sinodik v nedeliu pravoslaviia. Svodnyi tekst c prilozheniiami* [The Synodikon for the week of Orthodoxy. Collated text from the supplement], Odessa 1890. ‘Filosofskoe i bogoslovskoe dvizhenie v XIV veke (Varlaam, Palama i priverzhentsy ikh)’ [Philosophical and theological movements in the fourteenth century (Barlaam, Palamas and their followers)], *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniia* 279 (1892), 1–64, 348–427; reprinted in F. I. Uspensky, *Ocherki po istorii vizantiiskoe obrazovannosti* [Essays on the history of Byzantine education], Saint Petersburg 1892 (German summary in *BZ* 1 [1892], 177–8). Uspensky’s stature as a Byzantinist in the years following the Bolshevik Revolution may be judged from his entry in the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*: ‘He exaggerated the importance of historical matters involving the Church, ignored the class nature of the state, and idealized the Byzantine monarchy and the Orthodox Church.’ He nevertheless remained unmolested by the Soviet authorities until his death.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Other important nineteenth-century studies that may be mentioned include G. Nedetovsky, ‘Varlaamitskaia eres’ [The Barlaamite heresy], in *Trudy Kievskoi Duukhovnoi Akademii* of February 1873, and P. A. Syrku, *K istorii ispravleniia knig v Bolgarii v XIV veke* [A history of the correction of books in Bulgaria in the 14th century] (mainly on Gregory the Sinaite), n.p. 1899 (reprinted 2013).

⁽⁷⁸⁾ I am indebted in this section to Fr Samuel (Nedelsky), ‘Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), *Imiaslavie*, and Hesychasm’, with a valuable appendix of texts in translation. Nedelsky’s paper has been published in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), *Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii) Archpastor of the Russian Diaspora*, but without the appendix of texts. My page references are to the original paper, which the author kindly sent me. The most complete treatment of the controversy is the two-volume work of Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev), *Sviashchennaia taina tserkvi: Vvedenie v istoriiu i problematiku imiaslavskikh sporov* [The holy mystery of the Church: an introduction to the history and problems of the *imiaslavie* controversy] (St Petersburg: Aleteia, 2002). For good accounts in Western

European languages, see Antoine Nivière, *Les Glorificateurs du Nom, Une querelle théologique parmi les moines russes du mont-Athos (1907–1914)* (Geneva: Editions des Syrtes, 2005); and Tom Dykstra, *Hallowed Be Thy Name: The Name-Glorifying Dispute in the Russian Orthodox Church and on Mount Athos, 1912–1914* (St. Paul, Minnesota: OCABS Press, 2013). See also Hilarion Alfeyev, *Le nom grand et Glorieux* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2007).

⁽⁷⁹⁾ The second edition (1910) was paid for by the saintly Grand Duchess Elizabeta Fedorovna, and carried a commendation from the starets Varsanufi of Optina. The third edition (1912) was published by the prestigious Lavra of the Caves, Kiev. There is a recent French translation of Ilarion's book by Dom André Louf with a preface by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk: Hieromoine Ilarion Domratchev, *Sur les monts du Caucase: dialogue de deux solitaires sur la prière de Jésus* (Geneva: Editions des Syrtes, 2016).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ The review, by a monk called Khrisanf of the Russian skete of St Elijah on Mount Athos, circulated widely for five years before finally being published in *Russkii Inok*.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Schema-monk Ilarion, *Na gorakh Kavkaza* (Batalpashinsk, 2007), 119; cited and trans. Dykstra, *Hallowed Be Thy Name*, 24.

⁽⁸²⁾ See the Holy Synod's letter of 15 May, 1913, *Sviatetsyshii Pravitel'stviushchii Vserossisii Synod vsechestnym bratiiam*, 200–1, cited in Hilarion, *Sviashchennai taina tserkvi*, vol. 1, 537–8, trans. Nedelsky, 'Archbishop Antonii (Krapovitskii)', Documents, 35–6.

⁽⁸³⁾ Exod 33:11, and Joshua *passim*; Sirach, prologue; Zech. 6:11. In the Septuagint, of course, 'Joshua' is 'Jesus'.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ *Russkii Inok* 10 (1912), 62–3, Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), 'More on the Book *In the Mountains of the Caucasus*'; trans. Nedelsky, 'Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii)', Appendix, 6–7.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ *Russkii Inok* 15 (1912), 60–2, Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), 'More on the Book *In the Mountains of the Caucasus*'; trans. Nedelsky, 'Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii)', Appendix, 6–7. In this text, Archbishop Antonii describes the heresy of the *khlysty* (*khlystovshchina*) in lurid terms: 'The essence of this *khlystovskaia* deception consists of some peasant, cunning and sensual, who is called the incarnate Christ and some dirty old lady the Theotokos, and they are worshipped in place of God, and then they give themselves over to squalid sin ... They had one Christ God in Moscow (Koloskov), another in Petersburg (Churnikov), a third in Suzdal (Stefan Podgornyi), and also a Theotokos in Oranienbaum, Matrena Kisleva, who recently died of syphilis and was known by them as Porfiria, and, moreover, the Archangel Michael and John the Baptist in the form of robust peasants who hung about her.' Archbishop Antonii comments: 'It is to such delusion that Fr Ilarion—who himself, we hope, is not conscious of this—is leading his foolish followers.'

⁽⁸⁶⁾ Hieroschemamonk Antonii (Bulatovich), 'Complaint against Archbishop Antonii, conveyed to the Over-Procurator of the Most Holy Synod on 12 September 1912 by Hieroschemamonk Antonii'; trans. Nedelsky. 'Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii)', Appendix, 8–10.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Hieroschemamonk Antonii (Bulatovich), *Apologiia very vo Imia Bozhiia i vo Imia Iisus* [Apologia for faith in the Name of God and in the Name Jesus], (Moscow, 1913).

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii), ‘On the New False Teaching, the Deifying Name, and the “Apology” of Antonii Bulatovich’, Supplement to *Tserkovnii vedomosti* 20 (1913), 869–82; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitskii)’, Documents, 11–33.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Georges Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology, Part Two* (Vaduz: Buchervertriebsanstalt, 1987), 290.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Besides being decorated for bravery by Tsar Nicholas II, he was awarded the Legion d’Honneur by the French government for saving the life of a French Catholic missionary in Manchuria.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Florensky, *The Pillar and the Ground of the Truth*, trans. Boris Jakim (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press), 468.

⁽⁹²⁾ Florensky, *The Pillar and the Ground of the Truth*, 303. The emphasis is Florensky’s own. In support he cites Fr John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ*, the discussions of Ignatios and Kallistos Xanthopoulos in the *Philokalia*, the anonymous (Fr Amvrosii of Optina?) *Way of a Pilgrim*, Hieroschemamonk Antonii (Bulatovich), *Apologia*, and Monk Pavel (Kusmartsev), *Thoughts of the Fathers concerning the name of God* (566, note 747).

⁽⁹³⁾ From a letter of Florensky to Ivan Scherbov dated 13 March 1913, cited and trans. Avril Pyman, *Pavel Florensky: A Quiet Genius* (New York and London: Continuum, 2010), 101. For an account of Florensky’s role in the *imiaslavie* controversy, see Pyman, Pavel Florensky, 99–102.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light: Contemplations and Speculations*; trans. Thomas Allan Smith (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans), 24 (emphasis original).

⁽⁹⁵⁾ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Bulgakov was asked to prepare a paper on the issue for the council of 1917 which owing to political the events of that year could not be presented. The paper did, however, become the basis of his book *Filosofiia imeni* [Philosophy of the Name], most of which was written by the time he was exiled from Russia in 1922, although it was not published until 1953, nine years after his death.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ The epistle was published in the issue of 18 May of the Synod’s journal, *Tserkovnii vedomosti* [Church Gazette]. Compiled from three reports submitted by Archbishop Antonii (Khrapovitsky) of Volynia, Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdestvensky) and Professor Sergei Troitsky, it was signed by the seven bishops constituting the Synod of 16/29 May 1913 (one of whom was Khrapovitsky). Ern’s essay was published as a pamphlet: Vladimir Ern, *Razbor poslaniia svyateishego sinoda ob imeni bozhiem* [Critique of the Epistle of the Holy Synod on the Name of God] (Moscow: Religiozno-filosofskoe Biblioteki, 1917). My quotations are from an unpublished translation kindly made available to me by Fr Samuel Nedelsky.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Ern, *Razbor*, prologue; trans. Nedelsky.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Ern, *Razbor*, II; trans. Nedelsky (emphasis original).

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Florovsky concurs: ‘Psychologism in the explanation of prayer appeared to many safer, more humble, and more pious’ (*Ways of Russian Theology*, Part two, 376, footnote).

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Ern, *Razbor*, VII; trans. Nedelsky (emphasis original).

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Ern, *Razbor*, X, 1; trans. Nedelsky.

(¹⁰³) Archbishop Nikon specifically accused the *imiaslavtsy* of treating names as realities. See Dykstra, *Hallowed Be Thy Name*, 125–6.

(¹⁰⁴) For a brief account of the persistence of *Imiaslavie* in Soviet Russia and the role of Aleksei Fedorovich Losev (1893–1988) and others in ensuring continuity, see Oleg E. Dushin, ‘St. Gregory Palamas and the Moscow School of Christian Neo-Platonism (A. F. Losev, S. S. Averincev, V. V. Bibihin, S. S. Horujy)’, in Constantinos Athanasopoulos, *Triune God* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 102–13.

(¹⁰⁵) Vladimir Lossky, letter dated 6/19 January 1937, cited Hilarion, *Sviashchennaia taina tserkvi*, vol. 2, 205; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in Exile’, 98.

(¹⁰⁶) Lossky, letter dated 6/19 January 1937.

Martin Jugie and the invention of Palamism

‘Palamism’ is a modern term. It seems to have been first used by Martin Jugie in the early twentieth century to characterize an Orthodox—he calls it a ‘Graeco-Russian’—doctrine which he wanted to brand as quasi-heretical. There is, of course, a sense in which Palamas’ theological justification of Athonite hesychasm, with the special terminology he developed centred principally on the essence–energies distinction, may legitimately be distinguished from the teaching of contemporary hesychasts such as Gregory of Sinai, who makes no mention of essence and energies. But Palamas’ fourteenth-century adversaries referred simply to his ‘innovations’ or his ‘heresy’. The term ‘Palamism’ has a ring to it, suggesting a system of thought, a counterpart to ‘Thomism’, which is precisely why Jugie adopted it. From the start, it had a polemical colouring.

Martin Jugie and the Assumptionist Mission

Martin Jugie was one of the most learned Catholics of his day in all matters pertaining to Orthodoxy.¹ He was born in the Limousin region of south-west France in 1878 and was baptized Etienne. At the age of seventeen, he entered the noviciate of the Augustinians of the Assumption (an order founded in France in 1845 with the specific mission of Catholic evangelization), taking the name Martin. Two years later, he made his solemn profession at the Assumptionists’ house in Jerusalem. Since the seventeenth century, French religious—principally Jesuits and Franciscans—had been active in the Ottoman Empire, where under the terms of successive treaties with France (known as the ‘Capitulations’), they were allowed to proselytize among the Orthodox; the conversion of Muslims was, of course, forbidden. In the last years of the Ottoman Empire, the Assumptionists followed in the footsteps of the older orders. In 1895, the year (p.46) in which Jugie joined them, they founded an educational institute at Kadiköy, on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus opposite Constantinople, with the aim of encouraging the ‘return’ of ‘separated brethren’ to Rome in accordance with the appeal to the Orthodox of Pope Leo XIII in his Apostolic Letter, *Praeclara gratulationis publicae* (20 June 1894). Jugie was sent to Kadiköy in 1902 and remained there until the outbreak of the First World War. He taught Greek at first, and then dogmatic theology and canon law, to young men who were recruited with a view to being trained as Uniate priests.

The Assumptionist institute at Kadiköy rapidly became an important seat of learning. Two years after its foundation it launched *Echos d’Orient*, which under the editorship of Louis Petit (editor from 1897 to 1912, and subsequently Latin archbishop of Athens) became the leading Western journal dealing with the Christian East.² Jugie’s colleagues included well-known scholars such as Jules Pargoire (1872–1907) and Siméon Vailhé (1873–1960). It was at Kadiköy, in pursuit of the plan to train Uniate clergy who would work discreetly within the Orthodox world to bring about conversions to Rome, that Jugie laid the foundations for his immense learning.

After service in the French army during the First World War (French clergy were not exempt from military service), Jugie was called to Rome, where he was appointed to teach at the recently founded Pontificio Istituto Orientale.³ In 1922, the Orientale was placed by Pope Pius XI under the presidency of the Jesuit Michel d’Herbigny (1880–1957), who was to direct the institute’s work until his downfall (for reasons that are still obscure) in

1933.⁴ D'Herbigny's imagination was fired by the possibilities for Catholic proselytization that he could see arising in Russia due to the Bolshevik Revolution. Like most Catholics, until the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) he could only conceive of the reunion of Christians in terms of the return of Protestant and Orthodox 'dissidents' to obedience to the Holy See.⁵ Jugie fully shared this outlook. His master-works, the double article on Palamas and the Palamite controversy in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, and the massive five-volume survey of Orthodox theology, belong to this period.⁶ As a person, his colleagues found him 'humble, shy and even self-effacing',⁷ but as a writer he was trenchant and polemical.

(p.47) Jugie knew the sources very well, having read widely in the manuscripts as well as the printed sources. His account of Palamas' thinking is detailed and factually reliable; it is his interpretative framework that makes it contentious. In the opening columns of the *DTC* articles, he states his viewpoint clearly: 'Palamas' system is undeniably a novelty in the history of Byzantine theology.'⁸ Describing Palamas' thinking as a novelty was in itself nothing new. Western theologians had been doing so since the time of Petau. What was new was its characterization as a *system*. Palamas was not in fact a systematic thinker, and Jugie was fully aware of this, pointing out that Palamas chose to conduct his polemics not on the philosophical level but on the religious and theological levels.⁹ To represent his thought as a system betrays Jugie's own neo-Thomist assumptions. It is not that Jugie constantly compares Palamas with Thomas point by point. Rather his aim is to construct 'Palamism' as a set of propositions, a coherent body of thought, which he can proceed to judge first on rational grounds, then in relation to the patristic tradition, and finally in the light of the magisterium of the Roman Church.

Palamas, Jugie says, has sometimes been described as a Platonist or Neoplatonist. Jugie himself is not convinced of this because Palamas does not posit any intermediate entities between God and the world. Indeed, he does not seem to Jugie to take the transcendence of God seriously enough. Jugie faults him on rational grounds for conceiving of God in far too anthropomorphic terms. The soul and its faculties is an image Palamas frequently uses to suggest the way in which the energies are related to the essence, the soul's faculties maintaining a reality of their own, but not an independent existence. The sun and its rays is another favourite analogy: the rays emanate from the sun like the energies from God without causing any change in their source. The transcendence of the divine essence escapes Palamas, says Jugie (ignoring the apophatic side of his theology), because Palamas discusses God as a being in the same sense that creatures are beings.¹⁰ In consequence, he treats God as a composite entity consisting of primary and secondary elements.

If Palamas is unsatisfactory on the rational level, perhaps he does better with his patristic arguments. Not at all, says Jugie. He abuses the authority of the Fathers, manipulating them to suit his purposes. The most egregious example, in Jugie's view, is the way Palamas appeals to the Cappadocians to support his argument that if the hypostases can be distinguished from the divine nature common to them without destroying the simplicity of God, the energies can be distinguished likewise. Another example is the claim Palamas made at the Constantinopolitan council of 1351 that by distinguishing between the essence and the energies, he was only offering an explication (*anaptyxis*) of the **(p.48)** Definition of the Sixth Ecumenical Council.¹¹ The Sixth Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople in 680–681 to decide the Monothelete question, decreed that Christ has two wills: a divine one and a human one. Each has its own *energeia*, or operation, but the human will always submits to, and follows, the divine. The intention of the Council Fathers was to assert that Christ was a single agent while at the same time preserving both his divine and his human natures. The argument

that Palamas drew from the Definition—namely, that if the human operation is really distinct from the human nature, then the divine operation (*energeia*) is really distinct from the divine nature—seemed perverse to Jugie.

The ultimate standard by which Jugie judges Palamism, however, is that of papal and conciliar authority. Two centuries before Palamas, Gilbert de la Porrée had been censured by the Council of Reims (1148) for making a real distinction, which Jugie regards as comparable to that of Palamas, between the divine essence and the divine persons.¹² At the Fourth Council of the Lateran (1215), Joachim of Fiore's Trinitarian doctrine was condemned posthumously for a similar error that made a real distinction between the divine essence and each of the divine persons in order to define the character of three ages of human history: the age of the Father (in the pre-Christian past), the age of the Son (under the dispensation of the New Testament), and the age of the Spirit (still to come). Palamism also contradicts the Catholic doctrine of justification as set out by the Council of Trent (1545–1563), and the dogmatic definition of the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), which proclaimed that God is an entirely simple spiritual substance. All this is asserted by Jugie with much citing of Denzinger. For him, ecclesiastical authority trumped any rational argument or the adducing of any patristic texts.

Towards the end of the second of the *DTC* articles, which discusses the history of the Palamite controversy, Jugie is at pains to show how Palamism in his own day was a dead letter: 'not only is it forgotten, but it is openly contradicted in the theological teaching [of the Graeco-Russian Church].'¹³ Why, then, did he (p.49) bother to expend so much effort in refuting it? A few columns later, the answer becomes apparent. Catholic theologians, he says, do not find it difficult 'to demonstrate by clear and decisive arguments that the dissident church of the East is not the true Church'.¹⁴ The Easterners respond by attacking Catholicism on the grounds that it is guilty of introducing innovations, whereas their own Church has preserved the pristine Christian faith unchanged. The Palamite controversy is one proof among many that this is simply not true. If the Latins have introduced the *Filioque*, as the Easterners claim, the latter have introduced their own innovation, Palamism, even if they are too embarrassed to admit the fact now.

Palamism as a 'system' was thus invented by Jugie as part of the armoury of weapons he could use against the Orthodox Church in order to undermine confidence in it as a reliable vehicle of salvation and so encourage conversions to Catholicism. There was nothing particularly unusual about this approach at the time, alien as it might appear in the light of the ecumenism prevalent (at least in the West) today. The Catholic Counter-Reformation of the late sixteenth century, with its assumption of the soteriological exclusivity of the Roman Catholic Church, had little interest in the kind of 'corporate reunion' that the Council of Florence had tried to achieve in the previous century. The path to salvation in the new era lay in the submission to Rome of individual believers. In the seventeenth century, François Richard had attacked Palamas as a heretic in his *Targa* precisely for this reason, to encourage conversions.¹⁵ Jugie was working within a long-established tradition.

The Saint Sergius Theological Institute: Sergius Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky

Jugie's anti-Palamite writings were carefully studied at an Orthodox theological institute that had been opened a few years earlier in an industrial suburb of north-east Paris. After the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917 and the subsequent civil war, at least 1 million Russians came to Europe, forming large communities in Berlin, Belgrade, Prague, and especially Paris. A number of these refugees were educated people.¹⁶ Many had to take humble jobs to survive, (p.50) but it was not long before they set about founding cultural and educational institutions to serve their community. Initially the most important of these were in Prague and Belgrade, but from the mid-1920s, Paris began to play a leading role. It was there in 1924 that Metropolitan Evlogy (Georgievskii), the Moscow patriarchate's Archbishop-Metropolitan for Western Europe, with the encouragement of a group of professors of the Russian Student Christian Movement and the financial assistance of the YMCA, decided to found an Orthodox theological institute. Because the property was acquired on the feast-day of St Sergius of Radonezh, 'the great intercessor of the Russian land', the institute was named after him.¹⁷ As the only Russian theological school outside Russia at that time, it quickly attracted some of the best minds of the emigration. Among the professors whom Metropolitan Evlogy invited to teach there were Fr Sergius Bulgakov (Dogmatic Theology) and the then layman, Georges Florovsky (Patristics). They were joined a decade later by Archimandrite Kiprian Kern (Pastoral Theology). All three were to give some attention to Palamas, with Kern in particular playing a significant role in the twentieth-century retrieval of Palamite thought.

Sergius Bulgakov was a leading member of the early twentieth-century 'Russian Religious Renaissance'.¹⁸ A former Marxist professor of political economy at the University of Moscow, he returned to Orthodoxy in 1908, and in 1918, in the turbulent months following the Bolshevik Revolution, was ordained to the priesthood. He took the step of seeking ordination under the influence of his friend Fr Pavel Florensky, whose theological outlook he shared. Although he had no formal theological training, he had immersed himself deeply in the tradition represented by the novelist Feodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881), the religious philosopher Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900), and Florensky himself—the so-called 'Russian School'. He was expelled from the Soviet Union as an undesirable intellectual in 1923, and was teaching in Prague when Metropolitan Evlogy invited him to come to Paris.

Bulgakov's familiarity with Palamas was based on a study of the texts published in Migne and on the monographs of Bishop Porfyrrii (Uspensky) and Bishop Aleksii (Dobrinitsyn).¹⁹ What was important to him was that Palamas lent support to the sophiology that he had received from Soloviev and he remained committed to this until the end of his life. Soloviev himself does not mention (p.51) Palamas, but sought a unity between God and the world through the participation of the created in the uncreated based on Sophia, or the divine wisdom, which is both an active principle as the Word of God uttered in Christ, and a passive receptive principle as the perfect humanity eternally contained in Christ.²⁰ Soloviev hypostasizes Sophia as a divine figure alongside God, although he strongly denies that this means 'to introduce new gods'.²¹ Bulgakov in one of his earliest theological writings, *Unfading Light* (1917), speaks of Sophia as relativizing the absolute transcendence of God, so that God becomes accessible to created being while remaining inaccessible in his inner-divine life.²² He sees this as another way of speaking about the Palamite divine energies:

The divine energies streaming into the world, the revelations of the Divinity in the creature, introduce thereby differentiation into the Divinity itself, which to that extent already ceases to be a pure NOT for the world, but, in disclosing the inner-divine life, it makes visible what is invisible, introduces into immanent consciousness what is transcendent to it; so to say, it splits up and multiplies the Divinity as a single ray of the sun is split up and multiplied in its reflections and refractions. On the foundation of the operation of God in the creature, what God is in himself becomes known. Although this cognition in essence is inadequate, that is precisely why it represents the possibility of infinite growth and deepening.²³

But having established on the basis of the Palamite essence–energies distinction that there can be differentiation within the Godhead in addition to the three Persons, Bulgakov goes beyond Palamas in arguing, like Soloviev, for the hypostatic status of Sophia. Sophia is a hypostasis because she is ‘the love of Love’—that is to say, the eternal object of God’s love. Yet although a hypostasis, she does not disturb the triadic structure of the Godhead: ‘She does not participate in the inner-divine life, she is not God, and that is why she does not convert the trihypostaseity into tetrahypostaseity, the trinity into a quaternity.’²⁴ Palamas, too, had argued that he was not turning the trinity into a quaternity. But whereas for Palamas the energies were God encountered in his wholeness in a mode different from that of his essence, for Bulgakov Sophia is ‘found *outside* the Divine world, and does not enter into its self-enclosed, absolute fullness’.²⁵ As the beginning of a new creaturely multi-hypostaseity, Sophia is the world soul, the Eternal Feminine, the Church as ‘the body of God’.²⁶

(p.52) In his later work, especially the great dogmatic trilogy, *The Lamb of God* (1933), *The Comforter* (1936), and *The Bride of the Lamb* (finished in 1939, but published posthumously in 1945), Bulgakov continues to find the essence–energies distinction useful, but now also ventures some criticisms of Palamas. In particular, he complains that ‘Palamas virtually ignores the complex and essential problem of the relation of the energy to the hypostases’,²⁷ and in the final volume of the trilogy he flatly denies that Palamas correlates his teaching at all with the doctrine of the Trinity.²⁸ In Bulgakov’s mature judgement, Palamas’ doctrine of the energies is therefore ‘essentially an unfinished sophiology’,²⁹ which can provide him with some helpful analogies but is not fully adequate to the task of articulating a satisfactory theology of the relationship between the uncreated and the created.

In 1934, Bulgakov entered into a brief correspondence with Martin Jugie.³⁰ Two years previously, Jugie’s Palamas articles had appeared in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, and at the time of writing, he was putting the final touches to the last volume of his *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium*. But it was not the Palamite controversy that moved him to write to Bulgakov. As the editors of his two letters observe, he scrutinized the publications of his Orthodox contemporaries to see if he could discern any signs of a personal opening to the Roman Church.³¹ Just before writing, he had rapidly gone through Bulgakov’s *L’Orthodoxie*, which had been published in French in 1932, and it must have impressed him by its irenic spirit and breadth of vision.³² **(p.53)** In his first letter, he asks Bulgakov for clarification on some points of Eucharistic theology and suggests that the Russian theologian send him some of his publications as a basis for an article on him in a Catholic journal. He also mentions his own four-volume work on ‘Graeco-Russian theology’ published in the course of the previous few years in Paris.³³ Bulgakov’s reply has not survived, but he must have responded in a friendly tone because in the second letter, Jugie thanks him for his kind reply and for the offprints he has sent him. He ventures the opinion that theological quarrels are nearly always puerile and are merely pretexts. With a little good will, he feels, and sympathetic reciprocal study, Catholics and Graeco-Russians can easily be reconciled.³⁴

In reality, Jugie was convinced that the best way to Catholic–Orthodox unity was through the individual conversion of leading Orthodox intellectuals. He is unlikely to have known that Bulgakov had once considered becoming a Roman Catholic.³⁵ But although his research, as he says, had not gone beyond Russian theological writings after 1917,³⁶ he must have been aware of Bulgakov’s reputation as a Catholic sympathizer. The offprints that Bulgakov sent him, perhaps including some of the articles from the émigré journal, *Put’* (The Way), in which Bulgakov examines such doctrinal differences as the *Filioque* and papal infallibility and finds them not insurmountable, cannot have been displeasing to him.³⁷ The projected article, however, was never written.

It would be interesting to know if Jugie was aware at the time of the growing opposition to Bulgakov’s sophiology. In his first letter to Bulgakov, he had mentioned *The Lamb of God* as a book he particularly wanted to read.³⁸ It was precisely this work that brought the internal Russian dispute about Sophia to a head.³⁹ In 1935, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), the *locum tenens* of (p.54) Moscow’s patriarchal throne,⁴⁰ initiated an inquiry into the sophiological teaching of Sergius Bulgakov. Four years earlier, Metropolitan Evlogy, together with his St Sergius Theological Institute, had transferred himself to the jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarchate.⁴¹ Metropolitan Sergius therefore had no jurisdiction over Bulgakov, who was the Institute’s dean; however, by attacking Bulgakov, he could seek to undermine Evlogy. Sergius commissioned a theological report on Bulgakov from the Brotherhood of St Photius, whose members, under their president Aleksei Stavrovsky (1905–1972) and their vice-president Vladimir Lossky, had remained loyal to the Moscow jurisdiction and had not followed Evlogy to Constantinople. Stavrovsky and Lossky both submitted reports hostile to Bulgakov; Stavrovsky based his on a selection of quotations from *The Lamb of God*, while Lossky ranged more widely among Bulgakov’s writings. In a polemical booklet published in the following year, Lossky singled out for criticism the use Bulgakov makes of Palamas in *Unfading Light*,⁴² where Bulgakov argued that Palamas supports the idea of a creaturely Sophia. In a somewhat sarcastic tone, he accused Bulgakov of deliberately manipulating Palamas in order to claim the great hesychast’s authority for a spurious doctrine that confuses God with creation.⁴³

Most of the professors of the Theological Institute supported Bulgakov, but even among his colleagues he had his critics, principally Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) and Sergei Chetverikov (1867–1947).⁴⁴ In response to the Moscow patriarchate’s initiative, Metropolitan Evlogy set up his own internal commission (p.55) at St Sergius to examine Bulgakov’s theology. The commission produced a report which found Bulgakov’s views orthodox, but both Florovsky and Chetverikov refused to sign it. Florovsky, although more deferential to Bulgakov than Lossky, shared Lossky’s opinion of sophiology. In a letter to Bulgakov written ten years previously, Florovsky had argued that there are two teachings on Sophia, one coming from Soloviev and the other from Palamas.⁴⁵ Soloviev’s teaching, in Florovsky’s view, was heretical and was drawn from Philo, the early Gnostics, and the German theosophist Jacob Boehme (1575–1624). Palamas’ teaching, by contrast, descended in a direct line from Athanasius, Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nyssa: ‘The very terminology—οὐσία and ἐνέργεια—has its beginning in Basil the Great . . . I see no difficulty in this terminology.’ Sophia is nothing other than God revealed, God ‘towards the world’ (πρὸς τὸν κόσμον)—in other words, simply grace. Against the notion of a creaturely Sophia, Florovsky insists that Sophia is never the world. ‘The world is *other*, both in relation to grace and in relation to the “original image”.’ Sophia is therefore not a hypostasis but God’s ‘thrice-radiant glory’.⁴⁶

In the event, both Florovsky and Chetverikov left St Sergius. Florovsky went to America, where he was to become Dean of St Vladimir's Seminary, and Chetverikov travelled to Finland, where he became a monk at the New Valamo Monastery. Bulgakov remained at St Sergius, maintaining the orthodoxy of sophiology until his death.

Although Florovsky believed that the issues Bulgakov sought to confront with his sophiological arguments had already been dealt with adequately by Palamas, his knowledge of Palamas was fairly elementary. His expertise lay in the earlier Greek Fathers, who had provided the material for his course in patristics at St Sergius, his studies on the Byzantine Fathers only going as far as Photius in the ninth century.⁴⁷ It was not until 1959, at a congress held in Thessaloniki held to mark the sixth centenary of Palamas' death, that he devoted a paper specifically to Palamas.⁴⁸ What he emphasizes is not the distinctive features of Palamas' thought but his rootedness in the patristic tradition. To accept Palamas is to share in τὸ φρόνημα τῶν πατέρων ἢ, 'the mind of the Fathers'.⁴⁹ Following Athanasius, the Cappadocian hierarchs, Cyril of Alexandria, and (p.56) Maximus the Confessor, Palamas testifies to the reality of the Church's spiritual experience of God and to the highest expression of such experience in the deification of the Christian. Florovsky thus presents Palamas as the crowning Father of his neopatristic synthesis.⁵⁰ Although he mentions the opposition Palamas faced in his own time, he does not engage with Palamas' modern critics. For him Palamas is simply a late Byzantine expression of the mind of the Fathers, valuable for his witness to 'the action of the Personal God'.

The First Modern Orthodox Studies of Palamite Thought: Basil Krivoshein and Dumitru Stăniloae

In his article on Palamas in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Jugie had lamented the absence of any modern study 'in which Palamas' system on the essence of God and his operation, with all the consequences which this entails for what appertains to grace and glory, the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, is expounded and subjected to a critique'.⁵¹ The first to respond to the challenge to supply such a study was Fr Basil Krivoshein, who had been a student briefly at St Sergius before becoming a monk in 1926 on Mount Athos at the Russian monastery of St Panteleimon.⁵² In 1936, Krivoshein published an essay on Palamas in the Prague journal, *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, which immediately attracted attention.⁵³ The original Russian text was soon translated into German and English.⁵⁴ The English version, due to the constant demand for it, was also issued (with minor corrections) as a separate booklet in 1955.⁵⁵

(p.57) In this brief study, Krivoshein attempts two things: in the body of the text to give a synthetic account of those aspects of Palamas' thought that are most relevant to the monastic life, and in the footnotes to engage with Palamas' modern critics. The exposition of Palamas' thought in the body of the text is divided into three parts, beginning with 'the ascetic-gnoseological basis of the doctrine of Gregory Palamas', moving on to a consideration of essence and energies, and concluding with how Palamas conceives of the participation of the hesychast in the uncreated Divine Light. The emphasis is on how in practice we can attain communion with God. In thegnoseological introduction, Krivoshein rejects the idea that analogical discourse about God or philosophical analysis of concepts can teach us anything of real value: 'a true knowledge of God cannot be attained either through the study of the visible created world or through the intellectual activity of the human mind. Not even the most subtle

philosophizing or theologizing, however free from all that is material, can give the true vision of God and communion with Him.’⁵⁶ How we attain knowledge of God is through prayer, or more precisely through ἐπιστημονικὴ προσευχή, which the English translator, guided by Krivoshein’s Russian discussion, renders as ‘skilled-art prayer’. Such prayer is not simply a mental activity; it involves the whole human person, both body and soul, and implies ‘the antinomism so characteristic of Gregory Palamas’.⁵⁷ What Krivoshein calls Palamas’ antinomism centres on the teaching that God is at the same time both utterly transcendent and unapproachable as *ousia* and also fully immanent and present in the world as *energeia*. The supreme image of God as both *ousia* and *energeia* is to be found in the divine light of the Transfiguration revealed on Mount Tabor. The light is eternal and unchanging; it exists independently of our consciousness. What changes, says Krivoshein (following St John Damascene) is our capacity to receive it. The light of Tabor is thus uncreated grace, which is accessible to those who have been purified by the Spirit. We who contemplate it ‘contemplate not some created effect of the divine cause, in itself beyond our reach, not some light distinct from the uncreated Light, but the Divine itself in its reality’.⁵⁸

In his concluding remarks, Krivoshein, unusually for an Orthodox theologian, makes a case for doctrinal development in Orthodoxy. Palamas’ teaching, he maintains, is rooted in the Orthodox tradition, but to claim complete traditionalism for him is as mistaken as to regard him as an innovator who has (p.58) invented new doctrines. What Palamas has achieved is to bring together material from various patristic sources and give it ‘a further, more systematic elaboration and theologico-philosophical foundation’. Thus,

[t]he scattered mystical statements of his predecessors on the uncreated light of God first attain in him the character of a systematic theological doctrine. The doctrine of grace as divine power is also developed by him in greater detail than before and, what is most important, is connected with the rest of the teaching on God (the same can be said of the uncreated Light). The teaching on God in His ‘hidden supersubstance’ and ‘exteriorized energy’, although it does not belong to Gregory Palamas, first receives from him its theological and philosophical foundation in connection with the problem of the divine simplicity.⁵⁹

Taking his cue from Palamas’ claim that what he had introduced was not an addition (προσθήκη) to Christian doctrine but an explication (ἀνάπτυξις) of what is already implicit in it, Krivoshein compares Palamas’ achievement with that of Athanasius, who in the fourth century had introduced the new term *homoousios*.⁶⁰ What Palamas does is to draw out, by the use of a new terminology, the implications of the patristic teaching on divine-human communion, explaining how human beings can overcome through grace their creaturely limits ‘without any pantheistic confusion or absorption into the Divine Being’.⁶¹ In consequence of his recognition of doctrinal development in the sense of ἀνάπτυξις, the drawing out of aspects hitherto unexpressed but implicitly contained in earlier formulations, Krivoshein is able to make a distinction between Palamism and hesychasm. Hesychasm is a current of monastic teaching with its roots in Christian antiquity that reached its apogee on Mount Athos in the fourteenth century. Palamism is a particular version of hesychasm, new in some respects but not to be thought of as ‘an entirely new phenomenon in the history of Eastern monasticism’.⁶²

Krivoshein’s comments on the way in which Palamas has developed earlier thinking are intended principally as a response to Jugie’s assessment of Palamas as a heretical innovator. Krivoshein is respectful of Jugie’s erudition. Regarding his articles in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* and his exposition of Palamite teaching in his *Theologia Dogmatica*

Christianorum Orientalium as ‘outstanding owing to his knowledge of the sources of the period and to the philosophico-theological treatment of the subject’,⁶³ he takes his judgements seriously, even if he protests at the polemical points that Jugie sometimes seeks to score.⁶⁴ He is less impressed by other Western critics of Palamas, such as the (p.59) Assumptionist Sébastien Guichardan (1906–1985),⁶⁵ and the Jesuit Irenée Hausherr (1891–1978),⁶⁶ whom he finds blinkered by their neo-Thomist perspective. Guichardan seems to him especially prone to a superficial rationalism that induces him to try to fit the thinking of Eastern Fathers into ‘a whole scheme worked out by Western scholasticism’.⁶⁷ Hausherr is the better scholar with regard to the Orthodox tradition, but in Krivoshein’s view does not have Eastern monasticism quite in focus, making too strong a contrast between the coenobitic and eremitical forms of life, and often identifying the aim of prayer with the means it uses.⁶⁸ Krivoshein, it should be noted, does not make these criticisms in a confessional spirit. He is equally severe in his assessment of several Orthodox scholars.⁶⁹ Indeed, despite numerous disagreements, Jugie comes out of his analysis rather well.

Krivoshein had based his research solely on the printed texts of Palamas, relying on Migne and the homilies published in Greece in the nineteenth century.⁷⁰ Two years after the publication of Krivoshein’s article in the *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, Dumitru Stăniloae, then a young professor at the Theological Institute of Sibiu, published a work for which he had consulted several manuscripts in Munich and Paris besides the texts printed in Migne. This was his *Life and Teaching of St Gregory Palamas*, which appeared in Romanian in 1938.⁷¹ Stăniloae began his research on Palamas while he was in Munich in 1928–1929, where on the completion his doctoral studies in Romania at Cernăuți he had gone to carry out further research in church history.⁷² It seems to have been (p.60) there, while he was working under the Byzantinist August Heisenberg (1869–1930),⁷³ that he first came across a competent Greek study of Palamas, which although published in 1911 had not up to that time attracted much attention, Grigorios Papamichail’s *St Gregory Palamas*.⁷⁴ Papamichail gives a good historical account of the dispute between Palamas and Barlaam together with a valuable bibliography, but does not offer much in the way of theological analysis. Stăniloae was therefore stimulated to do some theological research of his own, which took him to the manuscripts of Palamas’ works in both Munich⁷⁵ and Paris.⁷⁶ In Paris he spent three months working at the Bibliothèque Nationale, where he made a thorough study in particular of Coislinianus gr. 100, an important codex of the fifteenth century which represents the third volume of the collected works of Palamas assembled on Mount Athos at the Lavra shortly after his death. This manuscript contains Palamas’ writings up to 1341 (principally the two apodictic treatises *Against the Latins*, the little work *Against Bekkos*, the first four letters to Barlaam and Akindynos, and the *Triads in Defence of the Holy Hesychasts*), as well as some works from the end of Palamas’ life (principally the four treatises *Against Gregoras*) in a better and more complete text than the one reproduced in Migne.⁷⁷ The fruit of Stăniloae’s research was a historical study of the hesychast controversy, which, despite being published in a language little read outside Romania, was quickly noticed and was later to have an important influence on Palamite scholarship.

It was not until eight years after the research carried out in Paris and Munich, however, that Stăniloae’s study appeared in print. On his return to Romania, he was appointed a professor at Sibiu’s Theological Institute. One of the first tasks he set himself was the translation into Romanian of the standard Greek dogmatic theology of the time, that of Christos Androutsos.⁷⁸ In the course of his translation, he became dissatisfied with what he saw as the author’s reliance on (p.61) Western dogmatic manuals and neo-Scholastic modes of

argument.⁷⁹ The new theological perspective that his studies of Dositheos and Palamas had given him was to find mature expression in his own *Dogmatic Theology*, published forty years later. In 1938, however, his main concern was to emphasize the theological differences between the Eastern and Western forms of Christianity, and for this purpose, in view of the research he had already carried out, Palamas was an ideal subject.

In the preface to his book, Stăniloae sets out his fundamental thesis, namely, that the dispute between Barlaam and Gregory Palamas was a clash between Western scholasticism on the one hand and the Eastern patristic tradition on the other. Despite criticism, this was a polarity he maintained to the end of his life. In the opening paragraph of his revised preface, published posthumously in 1993, he states unequivocally:

The hesychast controversy was the most important episode in the history of Orthodox spirituality after the patristic era. This controversy came about through a collision between Western scholasticism, which had already reached its final form in the fourteenth century, and traditional Eastern religious thought, and led to the final sharpening and formulation of Orthodoxy's doctrinal characteristics and its position in relation to the new thinking of Western Europe. Inasmuch as the doctrine of Gregory Palamas grew out of the theoretical and practical Eastern religious environment, it described and developed, in turn, the characteristics of this environment, so that today we cannot say anything serious and concrete about Orthodoxy without taking into account the contribution of this profound Eastern thinker.⁸⁰

Having announced the perspective within which he will present his material, Stăniloae discusses in successive chapters the early careers of Palamas and Barlaam, the beginning of the hesychast controversy, the progress of the controversy with Barlaam, the production of the *Hagioritic Tome*, the first hesychast synod of 1341, the events following the synod, the polemics with Akindynos, and finally the disputation with Gregoras. In the course of nine chapters he gives the most detailed historical account hitherto available of the hesychast controversy from its beginnings in 1335 to the disputation with Gregoras in 1348, the year after Palamas, vindicated by the synod of 1347, had been made metropolitan of Thessaloniki. The account is thoroughly rooted in the sources, both published and unpublished, with only occasional references to modern scholars.

(p.62) Although Stăniloae's book on Palamas did not have any immediate impact, it was brought to the attention of scholars by the Byzantinist Jean Gouillard (1910–1984), who praises it highly in an important review-article which appeared in *Échos d'Orient* only a few months after the book's publication.⁸¹ In his article, Gouillard discusses Krivoshein's work as well as Stăniloae's. He regards Krivoshein's study as not badly done, but marred by serious methodological errors through trying to be simultaneously an exposition and an apology, conflating Palamas with the broader hesychast tradition, and too often taking as demonstrated what has not yet been sufficiently studied.⁸² Stăniloae, too, reveals an apologetic intention in his preface, where he portrays the hesychast controversy in ideological terms as a clash between Western scholasticism, as personified by Barlaam, and the Eastern patristic tradition, as summarized by Palamas.⁸³ In the body of the book, despite insisting on a purely Latin background for Barlaam and unreservedly defending the Palamite version of events, Stăniloae nevertheless gives a detailed and generally reliable historical account of the controversy. Researchers, says Gouillard, will find the book very useful for the new texts it adds to the dossier on Palamism, chiefly in the historical but also in the doctrinal sphere. He commends it as the most objective and complete study of Palamism available to date.⁸⁴

Palamas in Post-War Paris: Vladimir Lossky and Kiprian Kern

Stăniloae's work in Paris in 1930 does not seem to have brought him into contact with any of the Russians who were later to work on Palamas. Basil Krivoshein was already on Mount Athos. Kiprian Kern was in Jerusalem. Only Georges Florovsky and Vladimir Lossky were in Paris, where Florovsky was teaching a course on the early Greek Fathers at Saint Sergius, and Lossky was about to embark on his study of Meister Eckhart with Étienne Gilson. Of these four it was Lossky, at that time merely a doctoral student, who was to play the pivotal role in the Western—but not only Western—reception of Palamas.

Vladimir Lossky left Russia in 1922 with his father, the well-known philosopher, Nikolai Onufriyevich Lossky (1870–1965).⁸⁵ They were among the Russian intellectuals expelled by Lenin who sailed from Petrograd (as St Petersburg was (p.63) then known) on one of the famous two 'philosophers' ships'. After a brief period in Prague, where Lossky attended the seminars of Nikodim Pavlovich Kondakov (1844–1925), he arrived in Paris and in 1924 enrolled at the Sorbonne to study mediaeval history. Lossky had always been a Francophile fascinated by the culture and spirituality of Western Europe who moved in intellectual circles different from those of the professors of the Institute of Saint Sergius.⁸⁶ It is indicative that whereas Bulgakov and Kern published their theological work in Russian, Lossky from the start wrote in French.⁸⁷ Nor, as a rule, did he address a narrowly Russian Orthodox readership: preserving Russianness was not part of his agenda. Indeed, his *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, published originally in French in 1944 and destined rapidly to become a classic of Orthodox theology, was not written primarily for an Orthodox audience at all. At the Sorbonne he had studied under the great mediaevalist Ferdinand Lot (1866–1952).⁸⁸

This led him in turn [writes his son, Fr Nicholas Lossky,] to become a faithful disciple of the great specialist in mediaeval philosophy Étienne Gilson, at whose feet he got to know personally several Catholic theologians who were themselves disciples of the Master. Among them were Fathers Jean Daniélou,⁸⁹ Henri de Lubac, and Yves Marie Congar—all later to become Cardinals—as well as several Protestants and philosophers such as Jean Wahl. It was this group of friends who in 1944 asked Vladimir Lossky to give a series of twelve lectures on the nature of Orthodoxy; for, they explained, everything they knew about it they owed to the writings of Father Martin Jugie, whose presentation was rather negative, if not to say something of a caricature. It was these twelve lectures that were published, that same year, by Aubier-Montaigne as *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*.⁹⁰

Lossky's guiding principle in these lectures is the conviction that spirituality cannot be separated from a doctrinal stance: 'The eastern tradition has never (p.64) made a sharp distinction between mysticism and theology; between personal experience of the divine mysteries and the dogma affirmed by the Church.'⁹¹ Theology is simply a means to an end, and the end is salvation, or, in the language of the Fathers, union with God understood as the deification of the Christian. How we attain such union is the question that lies behind all the Church's dogmatic struggles, from the battle against the Gnostics in the second century to the hesychast controversy in the fourteenth. Palamas fits seamlessly into this pattern. His 'radical apophaticism', inherited from Dionysius the Areopagite, makes God 'far removed from all that exists and more than unknowable', otherwise he would not be God.⁹² Yet St Peter teaches us that we become 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Peter 1:4). Any account of how we attain can union with God needs to respect the antinomic character of God's simultaneous

inaccessibility and accessibility, and the essence–energies distinction does precisely that. In his energies, or operations, by which he communicates himself in a more realistic sense than that of a cause operative in its effects, God becomes intimately present to his creatures without in any way compromising his transcendence. ‘The energies might be described as that mode of the existence of the Trinity which is outside of its inaccessible essence.’⁹³ Palamas’ opponents could not see this because, through their Aristotelianism or Thomism (as Lossky believes), they had become ‘alienated from the apophatic and antinomical spirit of eastern theology’.⁹⁴ Thus Palamas provides the conceptual framework for interpreting the patristic tradition as a unified whole, whereas his opponents may be dismissed as doctrinal deviants.

Lossky’s lectures were much appreciated by his audience and were published very soon afterwards by Éditions Aubier-Montaigne, the Paris publishers of Daniélou and de Lubac.⁹⁵ In the following year, Lossky collaborated with his Jesuit friends in the founding of the journal *Dieu vivant*, himself contributing an article on Gregory Palamas to the first issue.⁹⁶ This was ‘La théologie de la lumière chez saint Grégoire de Thessalonique’, which was included in the posthumous collection of essays, *À l’image et à la ressemblance de Dieu*, as ‘La Théologie de la Lumière chez saint Grégoire Palamas’.⁹⁷ In this essay, Lossky is (p.65) concerned with defending Palamas’ mystical realism against the views of Jugie, Guichardan, and Hausherr. He does so by insisting on the validity of an antinomic theology ‘which proceeds by oppositions of contrary but equally true propositions’.⁹⁸ The distinction between the essence and the energies of God is precisely an instance of such antinomy, necessary if Palamas was going to succeed in his goal of giving a dogmatic basis to mystical experience. ‘Energy’, however, is an abstract and philosophical term, used for convenience in dogmatic discussion. The ‘more concrete term’ for energy is ‘divine light’.⁹⁹ It is this light which is the content of mystical experience, because the uncreated, eternal, divine, and deifying light is what we call grace. That is why ‘almost the entire debate with Barlaam and Akindynos revolves around the question of whether the light of the Transfiguration was created or uncreated’.¹⁰⁰ Lossky insists that the theology of light, as articulated in Byzantine discussions of the Transfiguration culminating in those of Palamas, ‘is not a metaphor, a literary fiction lending an affected disguise to some abstract truth’ (as Jugie would have it), but ‘a reality inherent in Orthodox spirituality’.¹⁰¹ He concludes his essay with a plea that studies of the theological tradition of the East should ‘see and judge this tradition otherwise than through rigid concepts of an academic theology which is foreign to it’ (by which he means the neo-Scholastic concepts characteristic of Jugie and Guichardan), and cites a pioneering article of M.-J. Congar on deification in the Eastern spiritual tradition as a model of how one ought to proceed.¹⁰²

A year later (in 1946), Lossky returned to Palamas in the last of a series of lectures given at the École pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne and published posthumously as *Vision de Dieu*.¹⁰³ In these lectures, Lossky sharpens his polemical tone: ‘The Hesychasts have never had a good press in the West. The reason for this is in particular the bad faith of certain modern critics (p.66) who have wanted to mix confessional disputes with the study of a question in the history of spirituality’.¹⁰⁴ The last lecture in the series is entitled ‘The Palamite Synthesis’—‘synthesis’ because ‘Palamism’ (a term Lossky objects to) was not an innovation but the discussion of a form of mystical experience with a long tradition in Orthodoxy, which ‘is rendered into the technical language of theology and inevitably undergoes in this process a certain doctrinal crystallization’.¹⁰⁵ In comparison with the way he had treated the hesychast controversy in his earlier lectures, Lossky now deepens the gulf between Palamas and his adversaries. Quite unfairly, he brands Palamas’ opponents as

‘persons who cared very little about defending the Church’s dogma’ and describes them as mostly professors of rhetoric and humanists.¹⁰⁶ In reality, the category of ‘professors of rhetoric and humanists’ applies only to Nikephoros Gregoras (c.1290–c.1360), the leader of Palamas’ adversaries in the last phase of the controversy. It is significant that Barlaam and Akindynos are barely mentioned, whereas Gregoras attracts a full page of comment, which serves to emphasize the contrast that Lossky wishes to draw between the ecclesial tradition represented by Palamas and the ‘outer wisdom’ represented by Gregoras. The reason for Lossky’s passion (and manipulation of the historical record) is that his real purpose in the lecture is to defend the reality of the Orthodox believer’s immediate communion with God; everything is subordinated to that end.

It is important to note that both of Lossky’s lectures on Palamas delivered in 1944 and 1946, as well as the 1945 article published in *Dieu vivant*, were written in French and were addressed primarily to non-Orthodox audiences. The sharpening polemical tone that is perceptible in them is perhaps due to the fact that the later audiences were less intimately connected with him than the circle for which he prepared the addresses published in the *Essai sur la théologie mystique*. The polemics, however, are not conducted across an East/West divide. Taking his cue from Krivoshein, whose article he warmly commends,¹⁰⁷ he reserves his harshest comments for Jugie, Guichardan, and Hausherr.¹⁰⁸ He is appreciative of the work of his teacher, Étienne Gilson (1884–1978),¹⁰⁹ and of the publications of Congar and other proponents of *la nouvelle théologie*, particularly Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988).¹¹⁰ Nor does he dismiss the (p.67) Latin Fathers, though he is hard pressed to find support among them beyond St Bernard (the subject of an important study by Gilson), St Gregory the Great, and an anonymous Irish writer of the seventh century.¹¹¹ In his last essay (the text of a lecture delivered in 1946) he moves from a critique of Western rationalism to seeing the hesychast controversy as mainly an internal Greek affair: ‘To regard the adversaries of St. Gregory Palamas simply as representatives of western thought, as “Byzantine Thomists,” would be to distort many facts ... this intellectualism has eastern origins.’¹¹²

Although the lectures and the article have primarily an apologetic purpose, the scholarship they demonstrate is far from negligible. Like most of his predecessors, Lossky relies only on the printed texts of Palamas, especially the dialogue *Theophanes*, the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, and the homilies. *Theophanes* is particularly useful to him because of its discussion of participation in God on the basis of 2 Peter 1:4, ‘partakers of the divine nature’. His main guide to the modern literature is Krivoshein, whose bibliography supplies him with many of his references. He is not aware of Stăniloae’s book, however, or of Gouillard’s review-article in *Échos d’Orient*. Gouillard would have alerted him to the fact that the *Prosopopoia*, which he cites tentatively, had been proved several years before to be not by Palamas but by Michael Choniates (1182–1204).¹¹³ But these points do little to detract from the value of his work as an introduction to Palamas’ spiritual teaching.

While Lossky was defending Palamas against his detractors in the Francophone world, Archimandrite Kiprian Kern was working in a more Russian environment to deepen his compatriots’ understanding of Palamas’ place in the patristic tradition. In 1942, shortly after his appointment as Professor of Patristics at the St Sergius Institute in Paris, he published a study in the Russian series *Bogoslovskaja Mysl’* (‘Theological Thought’) on the spiritual predecessors of Gregory Palamas.¹¹⁴ Kern was convinced that Palamas was not an ‘innovator’, yet at the same time he

opens up new horizons for theologizing, and with him begins a new step in the history of thought. He offers something new, both in the area of methodology—reflecting in his own

person the entire centuries-old experience of Hagiorite (p.68) hesychasm and the mysticism of the Areopagite, and in the sphere of theological problematics itself, outlining new paths for the Christian exploration of thought.¹¹⁵

Although he uses the word ‘mysticism’, Kern attaches a warning to it: it denotes a concept of Western origin that expresses a spiritual striving for a grace-filled condition, a striving that in the Eastern context must be communal, not individualistic. Mysticism in the Orthodox sense is rooted in apophatic theology, which holds that true knowledge of God can be attained not by intellectual investigation but by immediate experience of him through ecstatic contemplation. Such experience implies a eucharistic setting, for ‘[t]he very nature of the Church is eucharistic, and only being in eucharistic communion, combined with the ... virtues and the *podvig* of humility, is mysticism established in the bosom of the Church’.¹¹⁶

Kern discusses Palamas’ antecedents in Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, Symeon the New Theologian, and Niketas Stethatos, arguing that this tradition is not purely intellectualist but also includes the participation of the body in the quest for union with the divine life. Palamas is the heir to a rich tradition. Interestingly, Kern does not maintain that this tradition comes to perfection in Palamas so that there is nothing further to be said:

Palamas is not the end point of the development of theological thought. The definitions of the Synodal and Hagioritic decrees of the fourteenth century do not impose a seal on the living pursuit of wisdom in the Church. Palamas outlined new paths in this direction and encourages and calls to a disclosing of the eternally vital Tradition of the Church. Neither on the side of methodology nor from the point of view of a problem preserved in Palamism, the mystical insights of hesychasm cannot be ignored in the history of Orthodox thought.¹¹⁷

It would be a mistake to see this as endorsing Bulgakov’s contention that sophiology is a legitimate development of Palamas’ insights.¹¹⁸ The ‘new paths’ outlined by Palamas, as he was to argue in his doctoral thesis, lay in the antinomies of mystical theology that were capable of overcoming the impasses of theological rationalism.

The thesis that Kern defended at the Saint Sergius Institute on 5 April 1945 was the fruit of decades of study. A massive work in Russian of over 850 pages, it falls into two parts, the first historical, comprising four chapters on the historical sources, the life of St Gregory Palamas, the works of Palamas, and a survey of patristic anthropology, and the second systematic, comprising five (p.69) further chapters on the theology of St Gregory Palamas, the nature of humanity (symbolism), the image of God, the Incarnation, and divinization.¹¹⁹ The defence of the thesis was a major event for Saint Sergius. It was the first doctorate in the twenty years of its existence as the only academy of Orthodox theology in the West. The audience was not restricted to the faculty and students of the Institute. Invitations were issued to Mgr Roger Beaussart, the auxiliary bishop of Paris, and a number of other prominent French priests and theologians, but to Kern’s disappointment only two or three Jesuits turned up.¹²⁰ But the successful defence of the thesis was noted by a Catholic institution that was to play an important part in making Kiprian’s work more widely known: the Belgian monastery of Chevetogne.

Chevetogne had been founded in the same year as Saint Sergius by Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873–1960), initially at Amay near Namur, with a special commitment to promoting church union, particularly with the Orthodox.¹²¹ Beauduin, who was strongly opposed to proselytism and wholeheartedly committed to rapprochement by fraternal dialogue, fell foul of the authorities in Rome after the promulgation in 1928 of the anti-ecumenical encyclical of Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos*.¹²² Papal policy towards the Orthodox in this period was in the hands

of the powerful Jesuit bishop, Michel d'Herbigny, who like Jugie and many Catholics at the time regarded fraternal dialogue as a threat to Catholic hegemony.¹²³ D'Herbigny saw to it that Beauduin was exiled from his monastery, which Beauduin accepted humbly, taking the opportunity offered by his exile to visit the Eastern Mediterranean in order to familiarize himself with Orthodoxy in its homeland. In Jerusalem in October 1929, he met Kern, who was then head of the Russian apostolic mission there. After a rather guarded first encounter, the two became friends.¹²⁴ Beauduin was not allowed (p.70) to return to Chevetogne until 1950, but as a result of meeting him Kern came into contact with other members of the community, including Dom Olivier Rousseau (1898–1984) and Dom Clément Lialine (1901–1958).

A month after Kern defended his thesis, Olivier Rousseau wrote to him congratulating him and offering to publish the dissertation in Chevetogne's journal, *Irénikon*.¹²⁵ In his reply, Kern explains that the dissertation is far too long for a journal, but suggests that Chapters 4 (on patristic anthropology) and 5 (on the theology of St Gregory Palamas) might be suitable.¹²⁶ In the event, it was Chapter 5 that was published, translated from the Russian by Fr Clément Lialine and entitled 'Les éléments de la théologie de Grégoire Palamas'.¹²⁷

Lialine, who was the editor of *Irénikon* from 1934 to 1949, was himself Russian.¹²⁸ Although he had become a Roman Catholic at the age of twenty-five, he retained a strong affection for his native land and its Orthodox faith. Kern had a very warm regard for him and trusted him implicitly to produce a scrupulously correct rendering in French.¹²⁹ The only anxiety he had was that Lialine might have a problem with the ecclesiastical censor.¹³⁰ This anxiety, evidently shared by Lialine, accounts for the editorial note at the beginning of the article. After mentioning the positive reception given by readers to Lossky's *Essai sur la théologie mystique* two years previously, Lialine says:

The pages published below on the theology of Gregory Palamas are somewhat along the same lines. They will perhaps disconcert the reader much more than a work like that of V. Lossky by their rather off-putting character (leur caractère (p.71) assez rebutant). They nevertheless touch on one of the most important realities of the theology of the Orthodox Church.¹³¹

Lialine goes on to present a brief apology on behalf of Palamas for his Catholic readers. The philosophy of the Latin Middle Ages, he says, must not be wholly identified with Scholasticism. Alongside it there are 'a good number of systems more or less tinged with emanationism, monism, or ontological dualism' which have generally been considered pantheistic, but deeper studies 'have discovered in them important nuances which correct at least the simplistic unfavourable opinion that has been formed about their orthodoxy ... Some of the errors attributed to the theology of Gregory Palamas have the same cause.'¹³² With this discreet reproof of the officially sanctioned neo-Scholasticism characteristic of Jugie, Guichardan, and others, Lialine prepares his readers for what is to follow.

Kern begins his article with a statement of his intention to give a simple exposition of Palamas' theology without any critical appreciation. In other words, he is not going to offend Catholic sensibilities by an attempt to promote Palamism. His work is justified because of the two previous serious studies of Palamas, those of Jugie and Krivoshein (he does not mention Stăniloae); the one, despite its scholarship, is one-sided and marked by a lack of sympathy for its subject, the other, restricted as it is to the ascetic teaching of Palamas, is incomplete. His aim is therefore to show how Palamas' teaching is rooted in the patristic tradition and how its dogmatic features flow from its mystical methodology.

It is Kern's conviction that the key to understanding Palamas lies in a proper appreciation of his theological approach. Accordingly, the first and longest section of the article is on the apophatic method. In Orthodox thinking there are two kinds of apophaticism. The first is rational and deductive, proceeding by way of affirmation and negation. The second is mystical, drawing primarily on the experience of prayer in the Liturgy.

But there also perhaps exists another apophatic theology, as Fr S. Bulgakov has shown. It opposes the two following negative points of view: (1) on the one hand, the inexpressible and undefinable character of that which is denied by the negation and which corresponds in this sense to the Greek privative alpha : ἄπειρον, ἄόριστον, ἄμορφον; and (2) on the other, the impossibility of defining, in so far as it concerns a state of potentiality, of implication, but not of a formal impossibility of definition, and which corresponds to the Greek particle μὴ, which should be rendered as 'not yet' or 'only in expectation'. In the first case, by reason of the absolute 'no' of negative theology, there exists no logical passage towards a 'yes' of whatever kind, of a positive teaching on God and on the world. Here the opposition is not dialectic but antinomic. There is no bridge over this abyss, and one can only bow down in a gesture of faith before the inexpressible.¹³³

(p.72) Palamas (and Bulgakov, for that matter) stand in the tradition of this antinomic apophaticism that goes back through Maximus, Dionysius, the Cappadocians, and Origen to Clement of Alexandria. The antinomic approach is a different theological method from the discursive. In Kern's view, it is the only way to read the Fathers that penetrates to the heart of their thinking, for there is no dialectical dependence between God and the world.

Once he has analysed Palamas' theological method, Kern moves on to dogmatic issues, for 'although at first sight the hesychast controversies appear to be about purely mystical and ascetical questions, they deal at the same time with profound dogmatic problems'.¹³⁴ These problems concern the distinctions that Palamas wishes to make within the Trinity, the number of the divine energies, the distinction between energy and substance, the created cosmos and the knowledge of God that may be gained by its contemplation, and finally the nature of the world soul. Kern argues that none of Palamas' positions on these questions is a novelty; all are rooted in patristic tradition.

In his concluding section, Kern summarizes the points that he believes he has established and returns to his methodological considerations. There is no discontinuity, he insists, between the hesychast movement in the fourteenth century and the monastic tradition that preceded it. Careful attention to Palamas' many patristic citations only confirms how rooted he is in patristic thinking. The more deeply we study Palamas' thinking the more easily we can dispel any doubts about his orthodoxy. His adversaries in the fourteenth century as well as his opponents today placed and continue to place too much reliance on a rationalist theological method. Indeed,

Palamism is to be distinguished from Western theology not so much on account of dogmatic differences as on account of the mystical method which it employs in theology. It is not difficult to reconcile Roman Catholicism with Palamism, but it is impossible to bring it into and embed it within the rigid forms of Thomism.¹³⁵

Certainly there are points in Palamas, Kern believes, that are open to criticism. His talk of 'higher' and 'lower' divinities is infelicitous;¹³⁶ he does not sufficiently explain how 'God' is to be distinguished from 'divinity'—a distinction which surely belongs to the dialectical order alone. But he does suggest a fruitful line of theological reflection for our own day by his antinomic method. 'We must not fear to accept antinomy and experience a sensation of

vertigo before the abysses of theology. These abysses contain the mystery before which our minds fall silent.’¹³⁷

Jugie’s Legacy

(p.73) The parameters of the modern study of Palamas were set by Jugie. It was he who seems to have coined the term ‘Palamism’, the chief characteristics of which were its theological and philosophical incoherence (since the essence–energies distinction is incapable of rational defence), its novelty (since it marks a distinct break with the patristic tradition), and its arbitrariness (since it was imposed on the Orthodox Church as a result of the Palamite capture of the ecumenical patriarchate). Moreover, Palamas’ successors had quietly dropped the most blatantly heretical feature of his teaching by treating the essence–energies distinction as *kat’ epinoian*, or purely conceptual, thus promoting a ‘mitigated Palamism’. Yet Palamas had been officially proclaimed a saint. The challenge to the Orthodox was clear: either prove that Palamas was not a heretic or submit to the Roman Church, whose orthodoxy has never wavered.

Among Palamas’ champions, Lossky, Krivoshein, and Kern responded to Jugie defensively, eager to demonstrate that Palamas was not a heretic, yet at the same time not shy to acknowledge that he did indeed open up new avenues of theological thought. For their voices to be heard, however, it was important that besides Jugie and the dominant Catholic line that he represented, there were Dominicans and Jesuits of *la nouvelle théologie* (Congar, Daniélou, de Lubac, von Balthasar) and also Benedictines discreetly involved in the ecumenical movement (Lialine, Rousseau, Winslow) who were willing to give their Orthodox brethren a platform. It is striking how warm in those non-ecumenical times relationships across the confessional divide could be, particularly in the case of Lossky and Kern. Indeed, Kern found his Benedictine friends at Chevetogne more appreciative of Palamas than some of his Orthodox confrères.¹³⁸

Jugie’s critique was the principal though not the only stimulus for Orthodox to study Palamas. Besides responding to Jugie, Orthodox admirers of Palamite theology also had to confront problems that were entirely intra-Orthodox. In the Russian émigré context, these problems concerned Bulgakov’s sophiology; (p.74) in the Balkans, they arose from the dominance in academic theology of Western-inspired neo-Scholastic modes of theological thought. In Paris, the way in which Bulgakov not only drew a parallel between the divine energies and the divine Sophia but even claimed that he was improving on Palamas drew strong protests from Lossky and others. Further east, not only was Stăniloae untouched by the sophiological controversy, but he did most of his work on Palamas before Jugie’s *DTC* articles appeared. In his case, he was prompted to undertake a personal study of Palamas by his dissatisfaction with Androutsos’s *Dogmatics*, the standard Greek theological textbook in the first half of the twentieth century.

Up to this point, all researchers apart from Stăniloae had relied on the inadequate editions of the selection of Palamas’ texts printed by Migne together with the homilies published by Oikonomos. The next step required a thorough investigation of the manuscripts and also engagement with Stăniloae himself, who despite Gouillard’s substantial review in the *Échos d’Orient* still remained unknown outside Romania. This next step was to be taken by Kiprian Kern’s pupil, John Meyendorff, who was thus to inaugurate a new era in Palamas studies.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ On his life and work, see V. Laurent, 'L'œuvre scientifique du R. P. Martin Jugie', *REB* 11 (1953), 7–32.

⁽²⁾ During the Second World War, *Echos d'Orient* was renamed *Études byzantines*. In 1946 it was refounded in Paris as the *Revue des études byzantines*.

⁽³⁾ Jugie was Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Orientale from 1917 to 1952.

⁽⁴⁾ For a fascinating account of d'Herbigny's career, see Léon Tretjakewitsch, *Bishop Michel d'Herbigny SJ and Russia: A Pre-Ecumenical Approach to Christian Unity* (Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 1990).

⁽⁵⁾ His main publication was entitled, significantly, *Un Newman russe: Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900)* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1911), translated into English by A. M. Buchanan as *Vladimir Soloviev: A Russian Newman (1853–1900)* (London: Washbourne, 1918).

⁽⁶⁾ Martin Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire' and 'Palamite (controverse)', *DTC* 11, part 2, 1735–1818; Martin Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissidentium* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1926–1935).

⁽⁷⁾ The phrase is from the obituary of Jugie on the Assumptionist website: <https://www.assomption.org/fr/mediatheque/necrologies/martin-etienne-jugie-1878-1954>. Jugie inspired devotion among his students. His disciple, the Assumptionist Daniel Stiernon (1923–2015), collected materials with a view to writing a biography of him, but never fulfilled his project.

⁽⁸⁾ Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire', 1758.

⁽⁹⁾ Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire', 1761.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire', 1760.

⁽¹¹⁾ Synodal Tome of 1351, §6 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 378).

⁽¹²⁾ Gilbert de la Porrée (c.1080–1154), who taught at the school of Chartres and became bishop of Poitiers in 1142, was a logician who made distinctions within the Godhead apart from those existing between the persons. According to Geoffrey of Auxerre (*Libellus contra capitula Gilberti Pictaviensis episcopi*, PL 185, 617–18), four propositions drawn from his works were condemned at Rheims: (1) that there is a real difference between God on the one hand, and the divine essence and attributes on the other; (2) that there is a real difference between the divine essence and the divine persons; (3) that only the three persons are eternal, the relations, properties, singularities, and unities which are in God not being God; and (4) that it was not the divine nature that became incarnate but only the person of the Son. None of these distinctions corresponds to the one Palamas made between the divine essence and the divine operations or energies. Moreover, Gilbert's were *logical* distinctions; he did not seek to work out their theological implications.

⁽¹³⁾ Jugie, 'Palamite (Controverse)', 1810. Jugie was not without justification in thinking this. The *imiabortsy* showed themselves to be ignorant of Palamite theology if not actually hostile to it. The *Nastol'naia Kniga*, published at the height of the *imiaslavie* controversy, states at the end of its entry on hesychasm that the 'nonsensical opinion of the hesychasts about the means of the apprehension of the uncreated light was soon given over to oblivion on its own'. Cf. the dismissive Greek view of Palamas reported by Kiprian Kern (note 138, below).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Jugie, ‘Palamite (Controverse)’, 1816.

⁽¹⁵⁾ François Richard, Τάργα τῆς πίστεως τῆς ῥωμαϊκῆς ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν διαφένδουσιν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας. For the reaction of the Greek hierarchy to this work, see above, Chapter 1.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Statistical details are given by Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). Raeff shows that although there were indeed many educated refugees, the majority (contrary to what is often assumed) were working-class.

⁽¹⁷⁾ The circumstances of the founding of the Theological Institute of Saint Sergius and its opening just after Easter 1925 are described by Metropolitan Evlogy in his memoirs, *My Life’s Journey: The Memoirs of Metropolitan Evlogy As Put Together according to His Accounts by T. Manukhin*, trans. Alexander Lisenko (Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2014), vol. 2, 504–19.

⁽¹⁸⁾ For a sympathetic sketch of Bulgakov’s life and theological outlook, see Andrew Louth, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the Present* (London: SPCK, 2015), 42–59.

⁽¹⁹⁾ As he reveals in the notes to the paragraphs devoted to Gregory Palamas in the historical survey of apophatic theology in the first section of *Unfading Light* (131–7).

⁽²⁰⁾ This is expounded fully in Soloviev’s *Lectures on Godmanhood*, especially Lectures 11 and 12.

⁽²¹⁾ *Lectures on Godmanhood*, Lecture 7, 154–5. The phraseology echoes that of Palamas.

⁽²²⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light*, 215. For Bulgakov’s exposition of Palamas’ essence–energies distinction, see *ibid.*, 131–4.

⁽²³⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light*, 215–16.

⁽²⁴⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light*, 217. In his later work, Bulgakov abandons any reference to a fourth hypostasis.

⁽²⁵⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light*, 217. Emphasis original.

⁽²⁶⁾ Bulgakov, *Unfading Light*, 218–19, 229, 259. Bulgakov is aware of Palamas’ polemic against the notion of a world soul (in 150 Chapters 4; Sinkewicz, 88), but claims that although Palamas rejects the astrological world soul, he affirms its existence in humankind (*Unfading Light*, 477, note 47). This appears to read too much into Palamas’ use of the word *hyperouranios*. In Sinkewicz’s translation, the text reads: ‘Thus it [the celestial body] does not have a soul, nor does there exist any heavenly or pancosmic soul; rather, the only rational soul is the human one, which is not celestial but supercelestial (*hyperouranios*), not because of its location but by its own nature, inasmuch as it is an intelligent substance (*noera hyparchousa ousia*).’ The human soul is ‘supercelestial’ because human nature is superior to the celestial angelic nature, which although similarly rational does not possess a life-giving spirit through not having been created together with an earthly body (150 Chapters 38; ed. Sinkewicz, 124). Bulgakov himself acknowledges as much in his summary later in the book of Palamas’ arguments for the embodied nature of human beings being closer to the image of God than the bodiless nature of angels (*Unfading Light*, 314–15), a point he comes back to in Jacob’s Ladder (originally published in Russian in 1929), 140.

⁽²⁷⁾ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2004), 244.

⁽²⁸⁾ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2002), 18.

⁽²⁹⁾ Bulgakov, *The Bride of the Lamb*, 18.

⁽³⁰⁾ Texts and discussion in Job Getcha and Vassa Kontouma-Conticello, ‘Deux lettres de Martin Jugie à Serge Boulgakov’, *REB* 67 (2009), 183–96. Jugie’s two letters are dated 2 May and 10 May 1934. Bulgakov replied at least to the first letter, but the authors of the article were unable to locate his side of the correspondence.

⁽³¹⁾ Getcha and Kontouma-Conticello, ‘Deux lettres’, 185.

⁽³²⁾ The French version, anonymously translated and slightly abridged, preceded the publication of the Russian original, which was only issued by Ymca-Press in 1964. An English translation of the first French edition by Elizabeth S. Cram was published in 1935. A new French translation of the integral Russian text by Constantin Andronikoff was published in 1980.

⁽³³⁾ This is his chief work, *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium ab Ecclesia Catholica Dissidentium* (1926–1933). A fifth volume was added in 1935.

⁽³⁴⁾ Getcha and Kontouma-Conticello, ‘Deux lettres’, 196.

⁽³⁵⁾ Bulgakov discusses his temporary attraction to Catholicism in 1918 in an autobiographical text (in Russian), *Beneath the Ramparts of Kherson*, which was not published until 1990 (French trans. by Bernard Marchadier: Serge Boulgakov, *Sous les remparts de Chersonèse* [Geneva: Ad Solem, 1999]). See also Paul L. Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 122–3.

⁽³⁶⁾ In his first letter, dated 2 May 1934, Jugie says that although he has specialized in Graeco-Russian theology, he has not gone beyond 1917 except for Khrapovitsky’s *Catechism*, which he understands has been withdrawn in the face of attacks by émigré theologians (Getcha and Kontouma-Conticello, ‘Deux lettres’, 195).

⁽³⁷⁾ Bulgakov sets out his views on the Orthodoxy’s doctrinal differences with Catholicism in a series of articles, ‘Notes on the Doctrine of the Church’, which appeared in *Put* (published in Paris) from the first issue in September 1925 to the sixteenth in May 1929. See Antoine Arjakovsky, *The Way: Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration in Paris and their Journal, 1925–1940* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 166–7.

⁽³⁸⁾ Getcha and Kontouma-Conticello, ‘Deux Lettres’, 195.

⁽³⁹⁾ For a succinct account of the Sophia Affair, see Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky*, 137–40, and for a more detailed discussion from Bulgakov’s perspective, Arjakovsky, *The Way*, 384–401.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Strictly speaking, Metropolitan Sergius (1867–1944) was deputy *locum tenens* at the time. When Patriarch Tikhon died in 1925, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy became *locum tenens*. On Metropolitan Peter’s arrest, Metropolitan Sergius became deputy *locum tenens* pending Peter’s release. In 1927, Sergius ‘tried to make himself useful as a patriot by issuing a declaration of political loyalty to the Soviet regime in the hope of gaining breathing

space for his Church' (Tretjakewitsch, *Bishop Michel d'Herbigny*, 175). Sergius became *locum tenens* in 1936, following reports of Peter's execution, and served in that capacity until 1943, when Stalin, in recognition of the Church's contribution to the war effort, allowed him to be elected patriarch.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Metropolitan Evlogy gives a full account of the political and ecclesiastical tensions that forced him to take this step in his memoirs: *My Life's Journey*, 685–736.

⁽⁴²⁾ Vladimir Lossky, *Spor o Sofii* [The controversy about Sophia], 39–41; trans. S. M. Nedelsky, 'Palamas in Exile', 96–7.

⁽⁴³⁾ Lossky's son, Fr Nicholas Lossky, maintains that his father had not intended his report to be published, 'not just because Father Sergius was a close friend of the family but because, as Lossky insisted, any critical text placed in the public domain should be ultimately positive, not simply negative. To us, his students, he insisted that Father Sergius was without doubt the greatest Orthodox theologian of the 20th Century and that his sophiology deserved to be corrected so as to render it entirely admissible. However, the members of the *Confrérie* were adamant that his criticisms should be published (in Russian) as a booklet with the title *Spor o Sofii (The Controversy concerning Wisdom)*' ('New Preface to Vladimir Lossky's *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*', in Nicholas Lossky (ed.), Vladimir Lossky, *Seven Days on the Roads of France, June 1940* [Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2012], 117).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ For a brilliant assessment of Florovsky's life and career, see Gavriilyuk, *Georges Florovsky*. For a detailed analysis of Florovsky's role in the Sophia Affair, see Alexis Klimoff, 'Georges Florovsky and the Sophiological Controversy', *SVTQ* 49 (2005), 67–100.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ 'Pis'ma G. Floroskogo S. Bulgakovu i S. Tyshkevichu', *Simvol* 29 (September 1993), 205–6, trans. Nedelsky, 'Palamas in Exile', 89–90.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Ibid. (Nedelsky's translation.)

⁽⁴⁷⁾ As Gavriilyuk remarks, '[t]he Palamite distinction between the unknowable essence of God and the uncreated divine energies did not play a noticeable role in Florovsky's neopatristic synthesis' (*Georges Florovsky*, 240).

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Georges Florovsky, 'St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers', in *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, vol. 1 of The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky (Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Company, 1972), 105–20.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Klimoff believes that Florovsky here had Bulgakov in his sights ('Georges Florovsky and the Sophiological Controversy', 96), but this seems to me unlikely at a time when interest in Bulgakov was at a low ebb.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ The argument put forward by Florovsky was perhaps especially tailored for the occasion. Paul Gavriilyuk, in his careful study of Florovsky's thought, finds that '[i]n general, Palamite theology did not play in Florovsky's retrieval of the Fathers the prominent role accorded to Palamism by Vladimir Lossky, John Meyendorff, Christos Yannaras, and other neopatristic theologians' (*Georges Florovsky*, 143).

⁽⁵¹⁾ Jugie, 'Palamas, Grégoire', 1776.

⁽⁵²⁾ For Krivoshein's career, see *Archiepiskop Vasilii (Krivoshein), Vospominaniia (Nizhnii Novgorod: Izdatel'stvo Bratstva vo Imia Sviatogo Kniazia Aleksandra Nevskogo, 1998)*, and

the obituary by Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia in *Sobornost Incorporating Eastern Churches Review* 8:1 (1986), 51–4.

⁽⁵³⁾ ‘Asketicheskoe i bogoslovskoe uchenie sv. Grigoriia Palamy’, *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 8 (1936), 99–154. The Russian text is accompanied by a résumé in French.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ The anonymous English translation was first published as ‘The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas’ in *The Eastern Churches Quarterly* 3 (1938), a Catholic journal (the predecessor of *ECR*) founded in 1932 by Dom Bede Winslow (1888–1959) of St Augustine’s Abbey, Ramsgate, Kent, and edited by him until his death. The German translation, by Hugolin Landvogt, ‘Mönch Wassilij, Die asketische und theologische Lehre des hl. Gregorius Palamas’, appeared in *Das östliche Christentum* 8 (1939), the journal of the Augustinian Ostkirkliches Institut of Würzburg, Germany.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ *The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of Gregory Palamas*, by Father Basil Krivosheine, *Monk of Mount Athos* (London: Reprint from *The Eastern Churches Quarterly*, 1955).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 2.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 16. By ‘antinomism’ (a term much used by Florensky and Bulgakov) is meant the affirmation of religious truths which to the human mind appear irreconcilable (such as the simultaneous threeness and oneness of God, or the perfect divinity and perfect humanity of Christ), but which on a higher (divine) level are fully compatible. Krivosheine quotes from Palamas’ statement at the council of 1351 that we must ‘theologize in such a way as to “unite while distinguishing what is in God and distinguish while uniting”’ (ibid., 22, quoting Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 391[PG 151, 739D]).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 45.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 48.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 49; cf. the Synodal Tome of 1351, §6 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 378 [PG 151, 722B]).

⁽⁶¹⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 49.

⁽⁶²⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 51, n. 2.

⁽⁶³⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 50–1, n. 1.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ For example, Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 59, n. 143.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Sébastien Guichardan, *Le problème de la simplicité divine en Orient et en Occident aux XIVe et XVe siècles: Grégoire Palamas, Duns Scot, Georges Scholarios* (Lyon: Legendre, 1933).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Irénée Hausherr, *La méthode d’oraison hésychaste*, *Orientalia christiana*, vol. 9, 2, no. 36 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1927).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 60, n. 148.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 55, n. 52.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Krivosheine makes extensive use of Bishop Porfyrii Uspensky’s books on Mount Athos, preferring them to Feodor Uspensky’s treatment of the hesychast controversy, which he finds ‘most unsatisfactory’ (Krivosheine, *Gregory Palamas*, 51, n. 1). He also finds fault with

Bishop Alexis Dobrodonitsyn's study of the fourteenth-century mystics (ibid., 55, n. 51). Although praising Bulgakov for asserting that the statement 'energy is God' does not imply its converse, he rejects his claim that Palamas' teaching on the divine energies is related to his own on the Divine Wisdom, on the grounds that Palamas' energies are not hypostatic in the way that Bulgakov represents Sophia to be (ibid. 66–7, n. 217).

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Homilies I to XLI are in Migne (PG 151, 9–526), reprinted from the first edition published by D. Kleopas in Jerusalem in 1857. Homilies XLII to LXIII were published in Athens by S. Oikonomos ton ex Oikonomon in 1861.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Dumitru Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura Sfântului Grigorie Palama*, Sibiu 1938. A second edition, with the preface revised by the author, was published by Editura Scripta, Bucharest, in 1993. The second edition adds an appendix of translated texts of Palamas: the second and third treatises of the first of the *Triads in Defence of the Holy Hesychasts* (originally published in Sibiu's *Anuarul Academici teologice 'Andreiane'* 9 [1932–3], 5–71), the *Apologia*, and the *Fifth Antirrhetic against Gregoras*. These are texts not included in the *Philokalia*.

⁽⁷²⁾ Stăniloae's doctoral thesis, 'Viața și Activitatea Patriarhului Dosofteiu al Ierusalimului și Legăturile lui cu Țările Românești' (published in *Candela* 40 [1929], 208–76) was on the activities in Romania of the patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem. Dositheos' enthusiasm for Palamas would not have escaped his attention.

⁽⁷³⁾ Heisenberg (the father of the physicist Werner Heisenberg) was Krumbacher's successor in the chair of Byzantine and Modern Greek studies at the University of Munich.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Grigorios Papamichail, *Ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Θεσσαλονίκης* † (St Petersburg and Alexandria, 1911). Papamichail had also published in the Alexandrian journal, *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 5 (1910), 385–425, a pioneering study of the hesychast controversy. On the importance of his work (his dates are 1874–1956), see Yannis Spiteris, *La teologia ortodossa neo-greca* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1992), 159–69. Spiteris reports Christou's judgement that Papamichail 'was the best Greek theologian of the first half of our century' (160).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ In *Viața și învățătura* (153–62) Stăniloae relies on cod. monac. gr. 554 for his account of Palamas' debate at the Blachernae palace with Nikephoros Gregoras. Elsewhere he also cites cod. monac. gr. 505.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ The Paris manuscripts cited include Coisl. 99, 100, and 101, and Par. gr. 1238.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Jean Meyendorff, *Introduction à l'Étude de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959), 333.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Christos Androutsos, *Δογματική της Ὁρθοδόξου Ανατολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* †, first published in Athens in 1907.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ According to the testimony of his daughter, Lidia Stăniloae Ionescu in her biography of her father, *Lumina faptei din Stăniloae cuvîntului: împreună cu tatăl meu, Dumitru Stăniloae* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2000), 173 (cited Adrian Agachi, *The Neo-Palamite Synthesis of Father Dumitru Stăniloae* [Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013], 8).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura*, 5 (trans. Agachi, *The Neo-Palamite Synthesis of Father Dumitru Stăniloae*, 39 [modified]).

⁽⁸¹⁾ J. Gouillard, 'Autour du Palamisme. Notes sur quelques ouvrages recents', *EO* 37 (1938), 424–60.

⁽⁸²⁾ Gouillard, 'Autour du Palamisme', 435–47.

⁽⁸³⁾ Gouillard describes the preface as 'une sorte de manifeste idéologique' ('Autour du Palamisme', 448). The revised preface of 1993 still has the character of a manifesto.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Gouillard, 'Autour du Palamisme', 455.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ For a biographical sketch of Vladimir Lossky, see Lossky, *Seven Days*, 101–7.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ At the University of Petrograd he had studied the civilization of mediaeval France. One of his teachers there introduced him to Meister Eckhart, who was to become the subject in France of his doctoral thesis. Another, the philosopher Lev Karsavin (1882–1952), guided his early reading of the Greek Fathers.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Of Lossky's books, only *Spor o Sofiia* (1936), which concerned a matter of purely Russian interest, was written and published in Russian. For a full bibliography of his books and essays, see Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, ed. John H. Erickson and Thomas E. Bird (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 229–32.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Lot had a Russian wife, Myrrha Lot-Borodine (1882–1954), whose publications include two still of value to students of Palamas: *Un maître de la spiritualité byzantine au XIV^e siècle*, Nicolas Cabasilas (Paris: Éditions de l'Orante, 1958), and *La deification de l'homme selon la doctrine des Pères grecs* (préface par le cardinal Jean Daniélou) (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970).

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Nicholas Lossky remarks that Daniélou was a frequent visitor to the Lossky home, where he used to discuss theology with his father (Lossky, *Seven Days*, 116). In 1944, Daniélou was appointed Professor of Early Christian History at the Institut Catholique of Paris.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Lossky, *Seven Days*, 110. In the following decade, the *Essai* was translated into English 'by a small group of members of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius' as *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke, 1957).

⁽⁹¹⁾ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 8.

⁽⁹²⁾ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 37, quoting Palamas, *Theophanes* 17 (Christou II, 242; Perrella I, 1278).

⁽⁹³⁾ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 73.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 77.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ In the same year that it published Lossky's *Essai sur la théologie mystique* (1944), Aubier-Montaigne also published Daniélou's brilliant doctoral thesis on Gregory of Nyssa, *Platonisme et théologie mystique*, and de Lubac's important study of the Eucharist in the Middle Ages, *Corpus Mysticum*.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Other articles in the issue included Daniélou on baptismal symbolism and von Balthasar on Kierkegaard.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Vladimir Lossky, 'La théologie de lumière chez saint Grégoire de Thessalonique', *Dieu vivant* 1 (1945), 94–118; repr. in Vladimir Lossky, *À l'image et à la ressemblance de Dieu* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1967), 39–65. English trans. by Thomas E. Bird under the title 'The Theology of Light in the Thought of St. Gregory Palamas' in Vladimir Lossky, *In*

the Image and Likeness of God (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 45–69. The article's change of title, says Nicholas Lossky, was because at the time of its original publication in 1945 'under Jugie's influence, the name Palamas and the term "Palamism" had become so obnoxious for many western theologians' that 'Gregory of Thessaloniki' was thought to be more diplomatic (Lossky, *Seven Days*, 116–17).

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Lossky, *Image and Likeness*, 51. The reference that Lossky gives to chapter 121 of Palamas' *150 Chapters* does not fully support such a bald statement. In Sinkewicz's translation, Palamas says: 'For to say now one thing, now another, with both being true, is characteristic of an orthodox theologian, but to contradict oneself is characteristic of no intelligent person' (Robert E. Sinkewicz, *Saint Gregory Palamas. The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988], 223).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Lossky, 'Theology of Light', 57.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Lossky, 'Theology of Light', 60.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Lossky, 'Theology of Light', 68–9.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Lossky, 'Theology of Light', 69, citing M.-J. Congar, 'La deification dans la tradition spirituelle de l'Orient,' *La vie spirituelle* 43 (1935), suppl., 91–107.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Vladimir Lossky, *Vision de Dieu* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1962). An English translation by Asheleigh Moorhouse, with an introduction by John Meyendorff, was published in the following year: Vladimir Lossky, *The Vision of God* (Leighton Buzzard: The Faith Press, and Clayton, Wisconsin: American Orthodox Book Service, 1963).

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Lossky, *The Vision of God*, 115.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Lossky, *The Vision of God*, 130.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Lossky, *The Vision of God*, 125.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ See Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 220, n. 2; 'Theology of Light', 49, n. 7.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Guichardan's book, *Le problème de la simplicité divine*, 'is a striking example of this theological insensibility before the fundamental mysteries of the faith' (*Mystical Theology*, 78, n. 2; cf. 'Theology of Light', 46, n. 2). Hausherr's article, 'La méthode d'oraison hésychaste', 'can in no way serve as a guide to the study of hesychasm' ('Theology of Light', 48, n. 4).

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Lossky praises Gilson's apophaticism (*Mystical Theology*, 68–9) and shares his concept of mystical theology ('Theology of Light', 49, n. 8).

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Lossky agrees with Congar (with some reservations) about the nature of the East/West schism (*Mystical Theology*, 14, 21). He refers to Daniélou's work on Gregory of Nyssa (*Mystical Theology*, 33, n. 2) and cites von Balthasar's *Kosmische Liturgie* (1941) (on Maximus the Confessor) several times (*Mystical Theology*, 99, 137, 190).

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Gregory the Great's account of Benedict's ecstasy, when he saw the whole of created reality in a single beam of light shining into his cell, is particularly suggestive to Lossky of Eastern light mysticism (*Mystical Theology*, 99–100; 'Theology of Light', 66, n. 57).

⁽¹¹²⁾ Lossky, *Vision of God*, 126.

⁽¹¹³⁾ Gouillard, 'Autour du Palamisme', 437, 449. Cf. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 224; 'Theology of Light', 64. In *Mystical Theology*, 224, Lossky acknowledges that the

authenticity of this dialogue had been questioned, but regards the matter as unimportant because it ‘belongs to the same spiritual family’ as Palamas’ unchallenged works.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Arkim. Kiprian (Kern), ‘Dukhovnye predki Sviatogo Grigoriia Palamy (Opyt misticheskoi rodoslovnoi)’ [The spiritual ancestors of Saint Gregory Palamas (An essay on mystical genealogy)], *Bogoslovskaiia Mysl’* (1942), 102–31.

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Kern, ‘Dukhovnye predki’, 102; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in Exile’, 77 (lightly adapted).

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Kern, ‘Dukhovnye predki’, 113–14; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in Exile’, 78.

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Kern, ‘Dukhovnye predki’, 131; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in Exile’, 79.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ In a piece written in 1950 for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Institute of St Sergius, Kern explicitly distanced himself from ‘Father Sergii’s conjectures’. Cited by N. K. Gavriushin, *Russkoe Bogoslovie: Ocherki i Portrety* [Russian Theology: Studies and Portraits] (Nizhnii Novgorod: Glagol, 2005), 351; trans. Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in Exile’, 86.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ The thesis was published five years later: Archimandrite Kiprian Kern, *Antropologiiia Sv. Grigoriia Palamy* [The Anthropology of St Gregory Palamas] (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1950; repr. Moscow: Palomnik, 1996).

⁽¹²⁰⁾ Unpublished letter of Archimandrite Kiprian to Dom Olivier Rousseau of Chevetogne, dated 8 May 1945. Kiprian writes: ‘Malheureusement l’élite spirituelle catholique était mal présentée. Msgr Beaussart, aussi bien que les Pères et théologiens catholiques, invités d’assister à cette assemblée académique n’étaient pas avec nous. Deux-trois prêtres jésuites seulement nous ont honoré de leur présence. J’ignore la vraie raison’ (*Archives d’Amay-Chevetogne* [AAC], *Fonds Olivier Rousseau: Correspondance*). I am most grateful to Fr Antoine Lambrechts, the librarian of Chevetogne, for making the unpublished letters of Archimandrite Kiprian to Dom Olivier Rousseau and Dom Clément Lialine available to me (with significant passages in the Russian letters translated into French by him) and for his illuminating comments on their contents.

⁽¹²¹⁾ In 1939 the community moved to Chevetogne, forty kilometres south-east of Namur.

⁽¹²²⁾ Immediately after the publication of *Mortalium Animos*, Amay’s journal, *Irénikon*, lost 500 of its 2,000 subscribers.

⁽¹²³⁾ D’Herbigny saw the Russian Revolution and the installation of the Soviet regime as a splendid opportunity to Catholicize Russia; Tretjakewitsch, *Bishop Michel d’Herbigny*, 55.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ Kiprian records in his journal that at their first meeting Beauduin was in the company of other Catholic monks and behaved very formally, only uttering what was in accordance with the official Catholic line. But when he met him alone later he found him quite different, a warm and sincere person with whom he could hold a genuine discussion. The long conversation transcribed in the journal has been translated into French by Fr Antoine Lambrechts and published in Nicolas Egender, ‘Aux origines des Semaines d’études liturgiques de Saint-Serge: L’archimandrite Cyprien Kern, dom Lambert Beauduin et les moines de Chevetogne’, *Irénikon* 86 (2014), 77–111.

⁽¹²⁵⁾ The letter does not survive but is mentioned in Kiprian’s reply of 8 May 1945 (in French), preserved in the archives of Chevetogne. For a portrait of Rousseau, an early disciple of Beauduin and a key figure in the work of East–West rapprochement, see Emmanuel Lanne, ‘Dom Olivier Rousseau 1898–1984’, *Irénikon* 67 (1994), 163–85.

(¹²⁶) AAC, *Fonds Olivier Rousseau: Correspondance* (letter in French, dated 8 May 1945).

(¹²⁷) Archimandrite Cyprien Kern, ‘Les éléments de la théologie de Grégoire Palamas’, *Irénikon* 20 (1947), 6–33, 164–93. In a letter (in Russian) dated 11 January 1947 Kiprian thanks Clément warmly for undertaking the translation of his article into French (AAC, *Fonds Clément Lialine: Correspondance*).

(¹²⁸) Born in St Petersburg, where his father was director of the Forestry Institute, Lialine left Russia as an eighteen-year-old in 1919 on the collapse of the White Russian front in the Ukraine, and came via Constantinople and Belgrade to Belgium. While pursuing studies in agronomy at Gembloux he came into contact with the Abbey of Maredsous, which in response to his religious enquiries sent him to Paris to the newly founded Saint Sergius Institute. Saint Sergius, however, did not attract him. Instead, in 1926, Lialine joined the Roman Catholic Church and two years later entered the new monastery of Amay. He remained at Amay–Chevetogne until his death in 1958. For further details, see Olivier Rousseau, ‘In memoriam: Dom Clément Lialine (1901–1958)’, *Irénikon* 31 (1958), 165–82.

(¹²⁹) In his letter (in Russian) dated 3/19 March 1947, Kiprian says that he has such confidence in Clément that he has no need to see the proofs (AAC, *Fonds Clément Lialine: Correspondance*).

(¹³⁰) Kiprian Kern, letter of 11 January 1947 (AAC, *Fonds Clément Lialine: Correspondance*).

(¹³¹) ‘Note de la Redaction’, *Irénikon* 20 (1947), 3.

(¹³²) ‘Note de la Redaction’, 4.

(¹³³) Kern, ‘Les éléments’, 14–15.

(¹³⁴) Kern, ‘Les éléments’, 26.

(¹³⁵) Kern, ‘Les éléments’, 188. Kern is only thinking here of the neo-Scholasticism with which he is familiar. Lialine takes the opportunity in an editorial note to remind him (and no doubt also to reassure the Catholic censor) that Thomas’s philosophy is perfectly compatible with the mystical life, as the example of St John of the Cross, who was devoted to Thomas, shows.

(¹³⁶) As a matter of fact, despite Jugie’s claim to the contrary, Palamas himself never refers to ‘higher and lower divinities’ in the plural.

(¹³⁷) Kern, ‘Les éléments’, 193.

(¹³⁸) Archimandrite Parthenios Polakis (1890–1965), the rector of the Greek parish in Paris, regarded Palamas’ ideas as ‘absurd’. In a letter (in Russian) to Clément Lialine dated 3 October 1951, Kern reports a conversation with him which is revealing of the attitude to Palamas in some Greek academic circles. In Fr Lambrechts’ French translation the conversation went as follows: ‘Une autre fois, quand j’ai demandé au même P. Parthenios le sens d’une expression grecque, assez difficile à traduire en français, il me demanda où on pouvait trouver pareille expression. Je lui disais qu’on pouvait la trouver, entre autres, dans certains entretiens de Palamas. “Bah, qu’est-ce que vous voulez? Qu’est-ce que vous pouvez attendre de Palamas, sinon des notions saugrenues pareilles? Chez les Pères de l’Église de l’époque classique vous ne trouverez sûrement rien de pareil.” Je lui demandai alors de me nommer un “Père de l’Église de l’époque classique”.—“Bon, euh, prenons Grégoire le Théologien.” Sans moindre effort, j’ai montré alors au P. Parthenios un endroit du Nazianze,

où il avait justement la même expression” (AAC, *Fonds Clément Lialine: Correspondance*). Polakis had studied theology at the University of Athens at a time when Christos Androutsos would have been one of his professors.

John Meyendorff's response to Jugie

The end of the 1950s was a propitious time for the publication of a major new work on Gregory Palamas. It was the height of the Cold War, when a number of Western scholars were inclined to see in Orthodox Christianity a valuable ally in the ideological struggle against Soviet communism.¹ Moreover, with the accession of Pope John XXIII in 1958, the Roman Catholic Church was about to undergo great changes which would lead to the abandonment of a triumphalist attitude towards the Orthodox Church and its replacement by a concept of sister Churches. If the publication in 1959 of Meyendorff's *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas* marks a watershed in the modern study of Palamas, it is partly because the potential readership was ready to respond to it.²

Meyendorff's Palamite Enterprise

John Meyendorff came from an old Baltic German family, which had distinguished itself in the Russian imperial service since the time of Peter the Great (p.76) and had embraced Orthodoxy in the mid-nineteenth century.³ Belonging as he did, however, to the first generation of exiles who had never known their Russian homeland, his education was almost wholly Western. In 1949, he completed a course of studies in Paris at the Institute of Saint Sergius (where the medium of instruction was Russian). At the same time he also pursued studies at the Sorbonne, receiving a *licenciat-ès-lettres* in 1948 and a *diplôme d'études supérieures* in 1949. This was followed in 1954 by a *diplôme de l'école pratique des Hautes Études*, which equipped him with the palaeographical skills needed for the reading of Greek manuscripts. Thus prepared, he began his doctoral studies at the Sorbonne in 1954 under the distinguished Byzantinist, Rodolphe Guiland (1888–1981).⁴

Meyendorff had decided on the topic of his doctoral studies long before he began working under Guiland. He was familiar with the publications of Vladimir Lossky, who had made Palamas the key representative of the Orthodox tradition in his mission to clarify boundaries of that tradition, not only for Catholics in the interest of better understanding of how the Orthodox differed from them, but also for Francophone Orthodox who might otherwise be easily absorbed into the surrounding Catholic milieu. Moreover, Meyendorff's teacher at the Saint Sergius Theological Institute, Kiprian Kern, had defended his thesis on Palamas' anthropology only four years before Meyendorff's arrival there in 1949. Kern will have known better than anybody else what was needed to take research on Palamas further: the study of the manuscripts. Five years later Meyendorff's *diplôme de l'école pratique des Hautes Études* was awarded to him for a dissertation entitled 'Lettres inédites de Grégoire Palamas', which consisted of the text and French translation of letters transcribed from manuscripts which he had consulted on a visit to Mount Athos.⁵

The thesis that Meyendorff defended at the Sorbonne in the summer of 1958, is remarkable for the depth and range of its scholarship. His first task, as he explains in the Introduction to the published version, was to make a thorough investigation of all the sources, both edited and unedited.⁶ In modern times only Papamichail and Stăniloae had consulted unpublished manuscripts of Palamas. Meyendorff assembled photographic copies of a much wider range of manuscripts—about seventy in total—from all the major libraries, especially those of Paris, Mount Athos, Moscow, Rome, Athens, and Oxford. He was able to do this largely

through the help of the Paris research institutes: the Institut de (p.77) Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes and the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique. His second task was to present a synthetic account of the life and teachings of Gregory Palamas, an account that he describes as having no claim to being more than an introduction—hence the title of the work.⁷ The predecessors whom he acknowledges in the Preface as his best guides are Dumitru Stăniloae and Kiprian Kern,⁸ Stăniloae's book providing him with his chronological framework and basic historical narrative, while Kern's monograph contributed to aspects of his theological perspective. Modern Western specialists on the Byzantine fourteenth century are also listed—Louis Petit, Martin Jugie, Venance Laurent, Rodolphe Guiland, Giovanni Mercati, Raymond Loenertz, and Giuseppe Schirò—but their contribution is confined to the historical account, which constitutes only the first part of the work.⁹ The main chapters of the theological exposition, constituting the second part, refer to comparatively few modern authors, and those who are cited are mostly Russian: Meyendorff's contemporaries Krivoshein, Kern, Lossky, Florovsky, and Verkhovskoy, and the pre-Revolutionary writers Brilliantov, Minin, Syrku, and Popov.¹⁰ The book thus combines two different genres—that of Western academic scholarship, and that of Orthodox apologetics—but as elements that are juxtaposed rather than fully integrated. Meyendorff himself was fully aware of the tension. In an interview he gave towards the end of his life he declared that the Orthodox of Western Europe (he might have added of Russia, too) 'in fact since the nineteenth century have adopted certain scientific conceptions, certain methodological approaches that are unique to Western civilization. Consequently, it is no longer as in the time of Byzantium where those of the East and the West were speaking two different languages, had very different social structures and (p.78) lived in a different intellectual world.'¹¹ Yet with regard to theology (as distinct from history) he found the West's 'scientific conceptions' and 'methodological approaches' only of limited use. In the same interview, he emphasized that in the modern age, 'Orthodoxy is only of value and interest if it presents itself as a witness of the Apostolic Tradition ... and not simply as the inheritor of Byzantine or Russian civilization'. The first part of the book, written in the Western mode of scientific history, may have incurred criticism for its one-sided championing of Palamas, but with regard to the accuracy of the factual information it gives, it has not been challenged except on points of detail.¹² The second part, with its attempt to witness to the Apostolic Tradition through the medium of Palamite theology, provoked controversy from the beginning.

The Initial Reception of Meyendorff's Work

On its publication in October 1959, the book was widely acclaimed. Not only did it introduce Palamas to a Western readership in a much more comprehensive fashion than hitherto, but it had been preceded earlier in the same year by Meyendorff's own critical edition of the *Triads*,¹³ and only a month previously by a little book that summarizes Palamas' spiritual teaching in a popular format.¹⁴ Henceforth Western scholars could not ignore Palamas, or treat him simply as a theological aberration. Notices were generally favourable, with reviewers also praising the more popular work.¹⁵ From the outset, however, a cautious note was also sounded. For example, Meyendorff's thesis supervisor, Rodolphe Guiland, commends the book as 'a solid study' which 'provides a great deal of new and important information', but expresses the opinion that 'without doubt ... it will not fail to provoke useful discussions, above all with regard to what concerns the second part'.¹⁶ Guiland was not mistaken.

(p.79) Roman Catholic reviewers were generally very positive about the book, even if they sometimes regretted its partisan approach to Palamas.¹⁷ The sharpest critique came from the Spanish Jesuit, Manuel Candal (1897–1967), an expert on Palamas’ theological opponents.¹⁸ Candal, in Stiernon’s words, ‘contests that Akindynos had falsified the Palamite writings, that the distinction between divine essence and energies had been initiated by Gregory of Cyprus, that Palamas had spoken seriously of created grace, and that his pneumatology could be considered an “opening” in the debate on the Filioque’.¹⁹ Most of all, Candal deplores the fact that a chapter had not been devoted specifically to the problem of divine simplicity, the principal point at issue between Palamas and his adversaries.

Orthodox reviewers could be just as critical as Candal, but from a different perspective. Writing in the French Orthodox journal *Contacts*, Elisabeth Behr-Sigel questions the propriety of attributing a personalist and existentialist theology to Palamas and opposing it to the supposedly essentialist and nominalist views of his adversaries.²⁰ Basil Krivoshein (writing in the same year that he became an auxiliary bishop in the Russian patriarchal exarchate of Western Europe) goes further, protesting against a polarization that reflects a modern apologetic concern rather than a serious attempt to interpret Palamas in context: ‘the author, in his desire to make Palamas’ theology more accessible to the modern reader, *modernizes* his teaching and, detaching Palamas from his age, endeavours to formulate his doctrine in the most up-to-date terms of Western European philosophy.’²¹ Meyendorff would have done better, in Krivoshein’s view, to have studied the patristic roots of the teaching of both Palamas and his adversaries. But the most hostile Orthodox reaction of all came from the Greek-American theologian, Fr John Romanides (1927–2001).²² Romanides is astonished that Meyendorff should describe Barlaam as both a nominalist and a Platonist. The contrasts between Barlaam and Palamas which Meyendorff draws in order to explain the hesychast controversy—an Evagrian intellectualism versus a Macarian mysticism of the heart, a Platonic dualist anthropology versus a Biblical monistic anthropology, an Ockhamite nominalism versus a (p.80) patristic existentialism—seem to him quite wrong. These polarities are certainly open to objection, but in opposing them Romanides presents a polarity of his own that is itself highly questionable. He sees Barlaam as theologically an Augustinian, which would make the controversy ultimately a clash between Eastern and Western versions of Christianity. Barlaam, it is true, was born in Seminara in Calabria, and contemporary Greek documents refer to him as an Italian—*italos*.²³ But in Constantinople he gained the patronage of the Emperor Andronikos III, who had him appointed *hegoumenos* of the Akataleptos monastery and used him as a Greek spokesman in local debates against the Latins and as imperial ambassador to the Avignon papacy. It was only after his condemnation by the Constantinopolitan council of 1341, and—just as importantly—the death of his imperial patron a week later, that Barlaam went off to Avignon, professed the Latin faith, and was rewarded with the Calabrian see of Gerace. Modern scholarship is satisfied that Barlaam was brought up as an Orthodox and that philosophically and theologically he was a Christian Platonist (or Neoplatonist) who saw Aristotle as perfectly compatible with Plato.²⁴ *Pace* Romanides, Meyendorff was not wrong to see the hesychast controversy as fundamentally an intra-Orthodox debate.

When the English translation of the *Introduction* was being prepared in 1964 under the title *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, Meyendorff took the opportunity ‘to correct a few errors and to give consideration to several pertinent remarks of my critics’.²⁵ Silent corrections include the modification of a paragraph on Macarius in the light of Guillaumont’s observation that, contrary to Meyendorff’s statement, certain condemned Messalian propositions may indeed

be found in Macarius.²⁶ But the only explicit consideration Meyendorff gives to his critics is in a footnote responding to Romanides:

My *tentative* interpretation of Barlaam's thinking was sharply challenged by J. S. Romanides in the *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, VI, 2, 1961. According to Fr. Romanides, Barlaam is to be placed in the line of classical Western Augustinism. If sufficient evidence was to be found for that interpretation in (p.81) Barlaam's mostly unpublished writings, the controversy would be reduced simply to a simple episode in the debate between East and West.²⁷

Obviously, Meyendorff did not believe that the controversy could be reduced simply to such an episode, and in this he was proved right. Indeed, Augustine has been shown to have had a greater influence on Palamas himself, through Maximos Planoudes' thirteenth-century Greek translation of the *De Trinitate*, than on Barlaam.²⁸ Romanides nevertheless raised a number of important questions about the hesychast controversy (for example, concerning the true role of the *Corpus dionysiacum* in the thinking of both Palamas and Barlaam),²⁹ which would serve as a springboard for further research.

Palamas on the Ecumenical Stage: Eric Mascall and Louis Bouyer

By publishing in French rather than Russian, as Krivoshein and Kern had done, Meyendorff intended from the outset to address a readership that was largely non-Orthodox. Like Lossky, he wanted to emphasize a contrast between Orthodoxy and Western Christianity but at the same time, by enabling Westerners to 'appreciate the great theologian of hesychasm better', to offer 'a constructive answer to the challenge which the Modern Age throws down to Christianity'.³⁰ Among the first to respond to Meyendorff's 'ecumenical' suggestion that Palamas' personalist and existential theology might help Western theologians to articulate a credible theology for the modern world were Eric Mascall and Louis Bouyer.

The Anglican philosopher and theologian, Eric Mascall (1905–1993) first encountered Orthodoxy at the Second Anglo-Russian Student Conference, held at St Albans in 1927.³¹ This conference, which Mascall describes as one of the turning points of his life, led to the founding shortly afterwards of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. From 1929 to 1936, he was chairman of the Fellowship's Executive Committee, and from 1937 to 1946, he was the editor of *Sobornost*, the Fellowship's journal. Through the Fellowship's annual (p.82) conferences at High Leigh in Hertfordshire he came to know Berdyaev, Lossky, and many of the professors at the Saint Sergius Theological Institute. Mascall did not share the general enthusiasm at the time for Berdyaev, finding that his extreme anti-intellectualism 'made rational discussion with him practically impossible'.³² Lossky, by contrast, impressed Mascall greatly by the clarity of his thinking: 'I have not always found it easy to discover what an Orthodox thinker really held about a difficult theological question; but there was never any doubt in the case of Vladimir Lossky.'³³

It was Lossky who introduced Mascall to the essence–energies distinction:

As I understood him, the Palamite doctrine of the divine essence and the divine energies was no mere *theologoumenon* but a direct consequence, if not indeed a constituent, of the deposit of faith; though this was a point on which I was hoping to question him if he had not been so suddenly taken from us.³⁴

Despite the clarity of his thinking, however, Lossky was unable to convince Mascall of the intelligibility of the essence–energies distinction. In his American Bampton Lectures delivered in 1958, the year of Lossky’s death, Mascall declares: ‘I must confess that I find the Palamite doctrine very difficult to follow and still more difficult to accept.’³⁵ He nevertheless goes on to say that he doubts very much whether there is a real *dogmatic* difference between East and West on this matter.

By the time Mascall came to publish his 1970–1971 Gifford Lectures, his judgement on the absence of dogmatic incompatibility had been considerably strengthened. What had tipped the balance in favour of a firmly positive view of Palamas was the publication in the interval of Meyendorff’s *Introduction à l’étude de Grégoire Palamas* and his *St Grégoire Palamas et la Mystique orthodoxe*.³⁶ From these two books, says Mascall, ‘[t]he impression which one derives is, surprisingly enough, that, whatever may be true as regards verbal idiom and the strictly philosophical setting, there is a fundamental *dogmatic* and *religious* agreement between St Gregory Palamas and St Thomas Aquinas’.³⁷

Meyendorff, whom Mascall later described as ‘one of the most creative Orthodox theologians of the present day’,³⁸ was able to present Palamas in a way that accorded well with Mascall’s Thomist sympathies. Mascall notes that (p.83) the nominalism and essentialism that Meyendorff attributes to Barlaam ‘are also the two *bêtes noires* of Thomism’.³⁹ He is far too acute a theologian to make a simple equation between Aquinas and Palamas, but he is intrigued by the perspectives that Meyendorff opens up:

Recent commentators have seen the heart of St Thomas’s thought to lie in its firm hold upon the principle of existence (*esse*) in contrast to the primacy given to the principle of essence by both his opponents and his more pedestrian disciples. Now, according to Meyendorff, it was precisely to counteract the essentialist trend that Palamas developed his distinction between the divine essence and the divine energies; and it is noteworthy that, just as many modern Thomists have hailed St Thomas as the true existentialist, Meyendorff gives this honourable title to St Gregory. It would, of course, be rash in the extreme to identify the divine existence in Thomism with the divine energy in Palamism; nevertheless it would be a fascinating and really important question for investigation whether Thomas and Gregory were not ultimately concerned with the same theological and religious question, even if they expounded it in terms of divergent metaphysical systems. Admittedly, the Palamite insistence upon the basic unknowability of God seems at first sight to be contrary to the Thomist doctrine that God is supremely intelligible. Nevertheless some Thomists [...] have discerned in Aquinas an agnosticism that has scandalised some of their less intrepid colleagues,⁴⁰ while, on the other hand, M. Vladimir Lossky has argued that the Palamite doctrine, while ascribing to God in his essence an unknowability exceeding that asserted by Plotinus, holds him to be wholly communicated in the energies by which he deifies us. And, even if we cannot simply equate *existence* with *energy*, perhaps we can see a difference between *essence* as it is understood by Aquinas and Palamas, and the reconciliation may lie along this line.⁴¹

Mascall is not put off (like Krivoshein and others) by Meyendorff’s attempt to discuss Palamite theology in existentialist terms. The transposition of historical problems and their solutions into modern terminology is, in his view, what ‘creative theology’ is about. Eager as he is, however, for his own ecclesial communion to enter into accord with Orthodoxy, he is not prepared to sacrifice rigorous thinking in the interests of a muddled ecumenism. He is nonetheless ready to see a complementarity between the Eastern and Western traditions, with Palamas’ apophatic approach to God and to a non-intellectualist version of deification having something particularly valuable to teach the West.

The French Oratorian, Louis Bouyer (1913–2004), also first encountered Orthodoxy through the professors at Saint Sergius. Brought up as a Protestant, Bouyer was ordained a Lutheran pastor and did not become a Catholic until (p.84) 1944. When asked to identify the chief influences on his life, he mentioned four: the Orthodox Sergius Bulgakov, the Calvinist Auguste Lecerf, the Lutheran Oscar Cullman, and the Catholic John Henry Newman.⁴² He was introduced to Saint Sergius in his Lutheran days by the dean of the American Episcopalian pro-cathedral in Paris, and, having discovered the Orthodox Liturgy there, went a number of times to hear Bulgakov preach.⁴³ He once told me that Bulgakov's sermons made such a powerful impression on him that he considered becoming Orthodox, but in the end it was Newman's example that prevailed. As a Catholic, he became a close friend of Lossky, whose fierce but intelligent fidelity to the Orthodox tradition he much admired, but he never lost his regard for Bulgakov.⁴⁴ Despite what he saw as a Gnostic element in sophiology, he felt that Bulgakov's vision of the Divine Wisdom was fundamentally in the tradition of Symeon the New Theologian and St Gregory Palamas.⁴⁵

Writing soon after the publication of Meyendorff's *Introduction*, Bouyer welcomes it as a sign of a new era in ecumenism, a splendid example of a scholarly work 'written in a spirit of eirenic sympathy'.⁴⁶ The only criticism he ventures is that Meyendorff has not done justice to the Evagrian heritage in Palamas' thinking. But he accepts Meyendorff's view of Barlaam as 'a Platonizing humanist, radically nominalist and anti-mystical' and endorses his corrections of Jugie.⁴⁷ He is also prepared cautiously to accept the essence–energies distinction as a teaching foreshadowed by the Cappadocians and in line with the Jewish conception of God's simultaneous transcendence and immanence, even though this distinction raises 'the thorniest of metaphysical problems'.⁴⁸ Such problems, however, are outweighed by the fact that what Palamas was concerned with was not the construction of a philosophical system but the reality of divine–human communion.

When he returns to the topic nearly twenty years later in his book on the Holy Spirit, Bouyer is much more confident about the essence–energies distinction.⁴⁹ (p.85) He is prepared to accept that Palamas sometimes gives a forced interpretation of his patristic sources,⁵⁰ but in his judgement this does not mean that Palamas marks a break in the tradition of the Fathers. Akindynos may be right in protesting to Palamas that the texts he cites from the Cappadocians refer to the divine attributes rather than to deifying grace:

But what are the divine attributes [asks Bouyer] if not dim glimmers we have concerning God ('des lueurs que nous avons sur Dieu') in accordance with his creating and sanctifying activity? Besides, although it is difficult to find a text in the Cappadocians where one can say that the term divine energy is applied directly to grace, there are numerous texts where, incontestably, the word *dynamis* is taken by them in this sense. But this word, in the language of the Fathers and of Palamas himself, is practically synonymous with *energeia*.⁵¹

Attempts by scholars to drive a wedge between Palamas and the exegetical tradition that preceded him are not found by Bouyer to be persuasive.

The discussion of Palamas in *Le Consolateur* occurs in a chapter entitled 'East and West: Theological Conflict and Spiritual Accord'. One of the positions that Bouyer combats in this book is the belief by Lossky and his disciples—a belief going back to the theologian A. S. Lebedev (1852–1912) and the philosopher and historian L. P. Karsavin (1882–1952)—that the West's Trinitarian theology has been pushed in a modalist direction by the influence of Augustine's psychological model of the Trinity.⁵² Well before the discoveries later claimed by Reinhard Flogaus and John Demetracopoulos,⁵³ Bouyer notices Palamas' use of Augustine

in at least two works, somewhat obscurely in the *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite*, but very clearly in chapter 36 of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, where Palamas explicitly identifies the Holy Spirit with the bond of divine love uniting the Father and the Son.⁵⁴ In pursuing his argument against Lossky's anti-filioquist disciples, Bouyer finds it important not only to point out Palamas' use of Augustine but also to stress the unimpeachability of Palamas' orthodoxy. Hence Bouyer's insistence that Meyendorff's works have completely demolished Jugie's contention that Palamas' teachings were heretical, anti-Latin, and anti-Thomist.⁵⁵ In Palamas, according to Bouyer, we have a supremely orthodox theologian who 'links the deployment of the energies in us with the gift of the Spirit', and 'for this purpose does not hesitate to appropriate the conception of Augustine that identifies the Spirit of God with divine love'.⁵⁶

Reactions to Meyendorff in the Theological Climate of the 1970s

(p.86) In the years between the publication of Bouyer's two studies, adverse criticism of Meyendorff's *Introduction*, although expressed by only a minority of reviewers, did not die away completely. It resurfaced in the 1970s as a result of a combination of factors connected with the revolutionary change in the Roman Catholic Church's view of the ecumenical movement that occurred as a result of the Second Vatican Council. Until the council, the official Catholic line was that the purpose of relationships with other Christians was to draw them back into unity with the Roman Church, a unity that had been broken historically through disobedience to Peter's successor. Fearful of the relativization of Catholic doctrine, Pius XI in his 1928 encyclical, *Mortalium Animos*, had forbidden the participation of Catholics in the religious services of other Christian bodies. The fathers of Vatican II, however, while insisting that the Church of Christ, 'constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in [*substitutit in*] the Catholic Church' were prepared to concede that 'many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure'.⁵⁷ Along with the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church that expressed this view (*Lumen Gentium*), a decree was issued (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) urging the faithful 'to recognize the signs of the times and take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism'.⁵⁸ It was in pursuit of this new policy that in 1968 the Holy See sent a delegation of theologians to the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC),⁵⁹ and in 1969 Pope Paul VI himself visited the headquarters of the WCC in Geneva. Without formally becoming a member of the WCC, the Roman Catholic Church signalled its full support of it.

The suddenness of this *volte-face* disturbed traditionalists as much as it delighted progressives. The conciliar documents themselves contained statements that could be interpreted as an attempt to juggle between conflicting positions. On the one hand, '[n]othing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss and its certain meaning is obscured';⁶⁰ on the other, where different understandings of tradition have developed (as in the case of the Eastern Churches), 'these various theological expressions are to be considered often as mutually complementary rather than conflicting'.⁶¹ Theologians naturally tended to favour one approach more than the other (the traditional emphasis on Catholic truth, (p.87) or the new emphasis on ecumenical pluralism), according to their theological leanings. The result was a long period of confusion and conflict.

One theologian who supported theological pluralism in the context of ecumenical dialogue was the Louvain professor and distinguished Syriac scholar, André de Halleux (1929–1994).

In 1973, de Halleux published an article in Louvain's journal of theology in which he reviews Meyendorff's arguments and those of his critics, and concludes by calling on both Orthodox and Catholics not simply to dwell on what they have to offer to each other but to recognize the complementarity of their respective traditions.⁶² The article proceeds by asking a series of questions based on the work of Lossky and Meyendorff: Divine darkness or vision of the essence? Deification or created grace? Antinomic thinking or rational logic? God as relational or as autarchic? Apophaticism or ontotheology? Patristics or scholasticism? Christianity or humanism? Personalism or essentialism? In each case, de Halleux argues that the dichotomy is a false one. It is apparent to him that there are two theological systems in play here: 'the one more scholastic, but not to the point of forfeiting all qualification as traditional; the other more patristic, but not to the point of being able to monopolise the title'.⁶³ De Halleux censures the views of Jugie, Candal, and von Ivanka. Palamism, he is convinced, has something to teach the West. But although he frequently cites Meyendorff in support of his arguments, he is not uncritical of him, taxing him with having assimilated too well the ideas that were dominant among French Christian intellectuals in the decade after the Second World War:

Christian existentialism and personalism, a unitary anthropology and meaning of the Incarnation, a historicity of Christianity and eschatological humanism, an ecclesiology of the mystical body and of the sacramental 'mystery'—all is presented as if he has deciphered the Byzantine theologians of the fourteenth century against this grid, so as to range his hero on the side of *théologie ressourcée* and drive his adversaries into the darkness of scholastic essentialism.⁶⁴

De Halleux sees Meyendorff as taking sides in the Catholic struggle between the neo-Thomists, who were in the ascendancy until Vatican II, and the proponents of the *nouvelle théologie* who came to the fore in France in the 1940s. The latter advocated a renewal or 're-sourcing' (*ressourcement*) of Catholic theology through the study of the Church Fathers. Naturally, Meyendorff found their outlook congenial—the Western author he cites most frequently in Part II of his *Introduction* is one of the leaders of the *ressourcement* movement, Hans Urs von Balthasar. De Halleux, however, like Krivoshein a decade earlier, finds Meyendorff's apologetics inappropriate and misleading. What is needed, in his view, is not a schematic set of oppositions but a thorough study of the patristic (p.88) basis of Palamite theology: 'Since Palamite theology claims to be fully patristic, the verification of this claim would constitute its decisive proof.'⁶⁵

Before the Orthodox could rise to the challenge, however, a group of Catholic theologians connected with the Istina centre in Paris responded with an attempt to falsify Palamism's claim to be fully patristic and so disprove the truth of Palamite theology. The origins of the Istina centre lie in the seminary of Saint-Basile founded in Lille in 1923 by the Dominicans of the French Province. The seminary sought to recruit Orthodox students from the Russian emigration in order to train them as Catholic missionaries for the conversion of Russia. Alongside this, the Dominicans founded the Study Centre Istina (*istina* being the Russian translation of the Dominican motto, *veritas*) with Fr Jean Omez (1892–1968) as its first director. In 1932, Omez was removed from office by Pope Pius XI's Russian policy advisor, Michel d'Herbigny, for not being sufficiently compliant with d'Herbigny's own plans for the Russian mission.⁶⁶ An unhappy period followed until Istina, now newly orientated towards ecumenism, was re-founded in Paris in 1948. As a project directed by Dominicans, however, Istina has never lost sight of its commitment to *veritas*, to truth.

In 1974 the centre's journal, *Istina*, published an issue devoted to Palamas which included a quartet of articles by theologians clearly opposed to 'a false irenicism' who sought to demolish the patristic basis that the Orthodox claimed for Palamite doctrines: Jean-Philippe Houdret, OCD, on the Cappadocian background to the essence–energies distinction;⁶⁷ Jean-Miguel Garrigues, OP, on the support for the essence–energies distinction in Maximus the Confessor;⁶⁸ Juan Sergio Nadal, SJ, on the patristic exegesis of Gregory Akindynos;⁶⁹ and Marie-Joseph Le Guillou, the Dominican editor of *Istina*, on the Palamite teaching on deification through participation in God.⁷⁰ These articles, which according to the unsigned editorial respond specifically to the work of John Meyendorff,⁷¹ were to attract wide attention.

Le Guillou was doubtless the author of the editorial. Deeply versed in Eastern spirituality, he was a specialist on the Greek world and had even, as a young Dominican, spent a year on Mount Athos. In his article, he claims a deep sympathy for the Orthodox tradition, but he also has reservations about the (p.89) language which Palamas uses to defend the reality of the Christian experience of deification:

We perfectly understand Palamas' intention, but in the light of the Eastern tradition represented by St Maximus we are obliged to pose the following question: Is not the Palamite vocabulary concerning the energies a metaphorical vocabulary, that is to say, an inexact (*impropre*) vocabulary, of which the sole aim is to safeguard the doctrines of the divinisation of man and the transcendence of God?⁷²

In Le Guillou's view, Palamas is forced to use a Neoplatonic vocabulary drawn from Dionysius the Areopagite rather than the vocabulary of Maximus the Confessor which he might otherwise have used, because it was on Dionysius that his opponents had centred the discussion. Le Guillou takes it for granted that Maximus had 'corrected' Dionysius in the light of the Monoenergist crisis, abandoning Neoplatonism's theurgic language of participation in favour of the language of created grace: 'it is the *habitus* of charity transfiguring the freedom of man that establishes him in an intentional communion of knowledge and love.'⁷³ It is this Maximian (and scholastic) language which better safeguards the doctrines of the divinisation of man and the transcendence of God. In the editorial he sums up his view of Palamism more strongly: Palamism is infected with Neoplatonic emanationism and cannot be seen as complementary to the scholastic tradition of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Carmelite Jean-Philippe Houdret's article reviews the opinions of Myrrha Lot-Borodine, Vladimir Lossky and John Meyendorff on the patristic basis of the essence–energies distinction and formulates the fundamental question thus: 'Do we have in the Cappadocians the affirmation of a distinction in God between the essence and the attributes that would be the starting-point of the real distinction between the essence and the divine energies professed by Palamas?'⁷⁴ After examining several key passages (and not omitting to invoke the authority of Daniélou and von Balthasar), his judgement is that we do not: 'Far from constituting a precedent, the doctrine of the Cappadocians on the divine names seems more to oppose the Palamite real distinction in God by founding the distinction in the order of our knowledge.'⁷⁵

Jean-Miguel Garrigues, a French Dominican of Spanish origin, was a student of Le Guillou. His article, warmly welcomed by Le Guillou in the editorial, is part of a doctoral dissertation on St Maximus which Garrigues defended at the Dominican studium of Le Saulchoir in 1970.⁷⁶ His thesis is that the scholastic (p.90) doctrine of the causality of grace, which creates a *habitus* of charity, was already present in the Fathers, most clearly in St Maximus, but was

abandoned by Palamas, who fell back on theurgic concepts to explain humanity's participation in God. He expresses the startling view (though not so startling that it is not also accepted by Le Guillou) that this Scholastic doctrine of a created *habitus* of charity lies behind the Sixth Ecumenical Council's definition in 681 of Christ's two wills and two energies, and he concludes with a barb directed against Lossky and Meyendorff: 'If contemporary neo-Palamism wishes to pour scorn on this Christological background of grace, it will fall under the condemnation of this Sixth Ecumenical Council which the Palamite councils—without perhaps weighing the consequences—invoked.'⁷⁷

The longest essay of the quartet, and the most valuable for the insight it offers into the way the Fathers were cited in the Palamite debates, is by Juan Sergio Nadal, a disciple of Manuel Candal, SJ, who was to continue his predecessor's work on Palamas' adversaries. Nadal had just completed his doctoral thesis at Rome's Gregorian University, a critical edition of Akindynos' seven *Antirrhetic Treatises against Palamas*. His *Istina* essay is one of the first fruits of his study of this text. Gregory Akindynos (c.1300–1348) was not a philosopher like Barlaam of Calabria. He was a hesychast monk steeped in the Fathers, who opposed Palamas' teaching on the grounds that Palamas was manipulating the patristic tradition in order to support a novel teaching. In the course of his essay, Nadal analyses Akindynos' hermeneutic principles in detail, establishing (1) that all the Fathers are inspired by the Holy Spirit, (2) that each Father is consistent with himself, (3) that each text needs to be interpreted in context, (4) that any interpretation must be in accordance with the Church's tradition, and (5) that as a last resort, in cases of inconsistency, there is a hierarchy of authority among the Fathers, with Gregory the Theologian occupying the first place. Nadal believes that Akindynos has correctly identified cases where Palamas was dealing with his sources in a cavalier fashion. His judiciously expressed conclusion is that one needs to advance along the paths of Palamite doctrine with great caution, verifying at each step the solidity of the ground beneath one's feet.⁷⁸

These articles—Garrigues' thesis in particular—provoked a strong reaction not only from Orthodox neo-Palamites but also from anti-Thomists both within the Catholic communion and beyond. In the following year André de Halleux published an article in Chevetogne's journal, *Irénikon*, protesting at the forcing of St Maximus into a neo-Thomist mould.⁷⁹ In the same year, two articles also appeared in *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* responding to the *Istina* articles from a more pronounced Palamite perspective.⁸⁰ The first was by (p.91) an author who had intimate knowledge of the *Istina* centre and its work among Russian émigrés before the Second World War, Georges Barrois (1898–1987), the second by a Greek professor who had recently returned to Greece after teaching for some years in Paris, Christos Yannaras.

Barrois had made his profession as a Dominican at Le Saulchoir just before the end of the First World War. In 1923 was sent to the École biblique in Jerusalem, returning to Le Saulchoir as Professor of Old Testament Studies in 1935 during the difficult years following the sacking of Fr Omez. Just before the Second World War, he moved to the United States, where he taught at Washington, Princeton, and St Vladimir's Seminary. Although he left the Dominicans in 1942, his article reveals an insider's understanding of the connection between the *Istina* articles and Catholic ecclesiastical politics:

There is little wonder that the editorialist feels dismayed at some Roman scholars who would regard Palamism as a valid alternative to scholastic theology. The essays may even indicated a mustering (unofficial) of theologians eager to uphold the 'solid' doctrine of St. Thomas recommended by several popes and by Vatican authorities with a warning against the

importation of divergent systems of thought into Catholic institutions of learning. This would explain why the editorialist reserved a Parthian arrow for the unnamed Uniate prelate who had the unfortunate idea of reintroducing the memory of St. Gregory Palamas into the liturgy of his Church.⁸¹

After summarizing the articles, Barrois offers his explanation of why Palamas' teaching had become an issue dividing the Eastern form of Christianity from the Western—or rather, from that of Western scholasticism. The problem here is that there are two versions of soteriology based on two different anthropologies, on the one hand participation through Christ in the life of God in virtue of our creation in the divine image and likeness, on the other, the 'infusion' of a free gift of grace by Christ for the healing of a humanity mortally wounded by the fall. For Barrois, these two versions are mutually exclusive: 'We have to make a choice.'⁸² The choice lies between a theology which imprisons God in his own transcendence as pure act, creating a deep gulf between creature and creator, natural and supernatural, and confining salvation to the moral realm, and a theology which allows God to interpenetrate the created world through his energies, thus conceiving of salvation in terms of deification. In Barrois' view, 'the versatility and fecundity of neo-Palamism creates a strong presumption in favour of its validity'.⁸³

(p.92) Christos Yannaras, who had spent the years of the Greek military dictatorship of 1967–1974 teaching in Paris both at Saint Sergius and at the Institut Catholique, was fully conversant with the theological trends prevalent in France at the time. He believes that the 'defensive return to scholasticism' marked by Garrigues' essay 'is merely an exception',⁸⁴ but an exception with sufficient institutional backing to merit rebuttal. Arguing that participation in God, and hence deification, is more than a union on the level of will or intention (*union intentionnelle*) which results in our moral 'improvement', as Garrigues would have it, he sets out in detail how the divine energies make personal communion with God possible by raising us to the rank of becoming 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Peter 1:4). Without the distinction between essence and energies God remains unknowable, or rather, is knowable only as an intellectual abstraction. In the Church's experience 'God is known only as a personal revelation (and not as an idea of "active" essence), only as a triune communion of persons, as an ecstatic self-offering of loving goodness'.⁸⁵ To reject the essence–energies distinction means to give rational abstraction priority over ecclesial experience. If God is defined only in terms of his essence, reducing the energies to created effects of his essence in act, grace becomes a created effect, thus rendering our participation in the divine nature impossible. The theology that Fr Garrigues expounds is to be resisted not only because it distorts the teaching of St Maximus but also, positing as it does an unbridgeable gulf between the human and the divine, because it is inimical to salvation conceived in terms of deification.

Two years after the *Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* articles, the *Eastern Churches Review* published an issue devoted largely to Palamas which marks a further stage in the debate initiated by the *Istina* articles. Of particular interest to us here are two essays, one by Illyd Trethowan (1907–1993),⁸⁶ the other by Rowan Williams,⁸⁷ which raise objections to Palamism on rational grounds, and the response to them by Kallistos Ware.⁸⁸ Dom Trethowan, a Benedictine monk of Downside Abbey and highly respected philosopher, is himself responding in his article to an earlier paper in which Archimandrite Kallistos (as he then was) set out the main features of Palamite theology for a meeting of the joint Anglican/Orthodox Doctrinal Sub-Commission.⁸⁹ Trethowan's philosophical position was basically Thomist but not uncritically so. He rejected syllogistic inference from abstract first principles as a valid method of proving the existence of God. His fundamental insight as a

philosopher was that we begin with an awareness of God, an experience rooted in mystery, and we then (p.93) use reason to elucidate and elaborate that mystery. In his *ECR* article he poses two questions: In what sense is God knowable? In what way can there be union with him? On the question of how we attain knowledge of God, he finds the idea of antinomy unacceptable because it implies that our notions of the divine reality are irrational. On the question of how we attain union with God, he regards the essence–energies distinction as unnecessary. We must not apply an *abstract* notion of simplicity to God, he says. The three persons *are* the divine nature. And it is our awareness that unites us with what is not ourselves. The distinctions made by the neo-Palamites seem to him purely scholastic:

Ware writes of the mystical experience as ‘a union without confusion’.⁹⁰ In the same paragraph he writes that ‘St Gregory Palamas and the spiritual tradition of which he is the spokesman are seeking to affirm the possibility of true mystical union between God and man, while avoiding pantheism and safeguarding the full personhood of each human being’. But why do we need the Palamite distinction for affirming this possibility if we find it as a *fact* that human knowledge is itself a ‘union without confusion’?⁹¹ Ware goes on to quote the saying of Palamas that ‘we participate in him [God], yet he remains beyond all participation’.⁹² He has said, as we have seen, that we ‘participate’ in the divine ‘energies’.⁹³ He tells us also that the essence–energies distinction, according to the Council of 1351, is ‘in the being of God’⁹⁴ and that ‘the energies are not a part or division of God, but they are severally and individually the whole God, God *in his entirety*’.⁹⁵ Must we accept these paradoxes? Isn’t the presence of the known to the knower the stuff of our experience?⁹⁶

These are serious questions, which merit a considered response, but before responding to them Kallistos Ware (the Orthodox member of the editorial triumvirate of the *ECR*, and in practice the executive editor) also prints an article by Rowan Williams, then a lecturer in theology at Westcott House, Cambridge. In his article Williams discusses two key issues: the nature of the essence–energies distinction and the meaning of participation in God. These issues are closely related because according to Palamite doctrine the ultimate fulfilment of the human person is the result of theosis, or deification, which is attainable by participation in God—not in the divine essence, which is inaccessible to us, but in the divine energies. Williams believes that the essence–energies distinction, while acceptable on the epistemological level, has been ‘exteriorized’ by the neo-Palamites and turned into an ontological (p.94) distinction. It is the ontological implications of Meyendorff’s discussions that he finds most objectionable. It seems to him that Meyendorff ‘drives a very considerable wedge between the two terms’, ‘essence’ and ‘energy’, regarding essence on the one hand as immutable and energy on the other as mutable, so that ‘what is true of one mode of divine existence is *not* true of another. The unity of God is far more gravely imperilled by this,’ says Williams, ‘than any Palamite or neo-Palamite seems to have grasped; it is the purest Neoplatonism, an affirmation of two wholly distinct orders of reality in God.’⁹⁷ The Palamite notion of participation, with its implication of the believer’s *ontological* transformation, also seems to him Neoplatonist. Like Garrigues (whose *Istina* article he finds ‘brilliant’),⁹⁸ he understands participation in moral rather than ontological terms; it means a union with God on the level of the will alone.

Ware’s response to these articles begins with a discussion of antinomy. For its lucidity, his definition of the term is worth quoting in full:

By an ‘antinomy’ in theology I mean the affirmation of two contrasting or opposed truths, which cannot be reconciled on the level of the discursive reason although a reconciliation is possible on the higher level of contemplative experience. Because God lies ‘beyond’ the

world in a unique sense, he cannot be precisely conceived by human reason or exactly described by human language. But if there are no exact descriptions of God, there are many ‘pointers’. In order to reach out towards that which is inconceivable, the Christian tradition speaks in ‘antinomic’ fashion—as Newman put it, ‘saying and unsaying to positive effect’. If we rest satisfied with a strictly ‘logical’ and ‘rational’ theology—meaning by this the logic and reason of fallen man—then we risk making idols out of our finite, human concepts. Antinomy helps us to shatter these idols and to point, beyond logic and discursive reason, to the living reality of the infinite and uncreated God.⁹⁹

Antinomy, in Ware’s view, is thus simply the recognition of the finitude of human concepts. It does not entail incoherence unless in using antinomic concepts we are attempting to account for the whole of reality within the limits of discursive reasoning. In response to Trethowan’s arguments against the need for the essence–energy distinction, Ware accepts that the sense of mystery is at the root of all human experience in which an awareness of God is present. But there remains the possibility of an unmediated communion with God, which, he insists, does raise problems peculiar to it. In order to indicate these, Ware appeals to the Evagrian threefold division of the spiritual life. The first two levels, the levels of the virtuous life (*praktikē*) and of natural contemplation (*physikē theōria*), correspond to Trethowan’s experience of God though the sense of ‘ought’ and the awareness of the ‘isness’ of things. The third level of unmediated communion (*theologia*) through love requires some explanation of how God, while remaining transcendent, also becomes immanent without (p.95) blurring the distinction between the creature and the Creator.¹⁰⁰ Trethowan, however, does not see why unmediated ‘union’ should present special problems: ‘We have to say that that what is present to us in our awareness becomes “part” of us. For we are changed by it, although it does not change. What we know is known by us in its acting upon us and only so.’¹⁰¹ There is no need, he says, for a distinction between essence and energies. In presenting a counter-argument from the patristic tradition, Ware defends the Palamite distinction but does not claim too much for it. Palamas, he reminds us, ‘insists that when talking of divine reality, we cannot speak with exact precision but only by way of symbol, image and analogy’.¹⁰²

Ware’s response to Williams’s article is less receptive to what it has to offer. He concedes that Williams has rightly drawn attention to ‘the danger of “ontologizing” logic, treating it as descriptive of fact, not regulative of language’, but he finds his discussion too much ‘an abstract analysis of the “philosophical structures” of Palamism’, lacking a sense of the historical context of the hesychast controversy.¹⁰³ Philosophical statements cannot be treated as right or wrong in themselves without reference to the particular questions they were intended to answer. ‘Palamas’s own writings,’ Ware insists, ‘make it abundantly clear that he affirmed the essence–energies distinction *not for philosophical but for experiential reasons*.’¹⁰⁴ Williams’s arguments are judged by Ware, somewhat unfairly, to be mostly beside the point.¹⁰⁵

Meyendorff’s Response to his Critics

These debates influenced Meyendorff’s thinking, but not immediately. In the introduction to a volume of collected studies on Palamas and related topics published in 1974 he mentions the debates stimulated by his evaluation of Palamite theology but declines to comment on them, expressing instead his satisfaction that one of the most important results of his work has been the publication of the entire corpus of Palamas’ writings by Professor Christou of

Thessaloniki.¹⁰⁶ After 1959 Meyendorff continued to discuss details of the hesychast controversy in a number of publications,¹⁰⁷ but did not return to make an (p.96) overall assessment of Palamism until he was invited in the early 1980s to contribute an entry on Gregory Palamas to the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*.¹⁰⁸ This important article makes it clear that in the interval since 1959 Meyendorff had accepted the criticism of his hermeneutic principles that had been expressed by scholars such as Krivoshein and de Halleux. He no longer argues in terms of the dichotomies he had found useful in his *Introduction*: Barlaam is not now described as a nominalist, nor is Palamas presented *tout court* as a Christian existentialist. Instead, Meyendorff carefully reviews Palamas' soteriological teaching, showing how it is founded on earlier patristic doctrine and on the experience of the Church. The entire work of Palamas, Meyendorff maintains, was centred on deification. That is why Palamas describes the knowledge of God as supernatural (ὑπερφυσική), for such knowledge requires a real participation in the divine presence. By contrast Barlaam, without denying divine illumination (accessible to the pagan philosophers as well the Church Fathers), held that all human knowledge of God was relative or symbolic. Palamas discusses knowledge of God in terms of mystical experience as described by Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory of Nyssa. This experience is not merely 'negative'. The cloud which Moses entered on Mount Sinai symbolizes not a cessation of sensory activity 'but a *vision* which presupposes a "purification of the intelligence" '.¹⁰⁹ This vision implies an encounter with God characterized by what Gregory of Nyssa calls *epektasis*, a never-ending progress 'from glory to glory'. 'Transposed by Palamas into technical terms,' says Meyendorff, 'this experience takes the form of a doctrine of *transcendent essence*, distinct from the revelation of the divine Persons in the *uncreated energies*.'¹¹⁰ In his interpretation of Christian experience, Palamas considers dangerous all reduction of 'the vision of God' to a created or natural function, whether intellectual, physical, or mystical. He does not deny the preparatory role of philosophy, but he insists that communion with God is never the result of merely natural efforts.¹¹¹ Deification (p.97) is not the result of the contemplative ascent of the mind to God but is rooted in Christology. The key experience here was that of the apostles at the Transfiguration. The theophany of the Transfiguration was a manifestation of the deified humanity of Christ penetrated by *uncreated* light.¹¹² It is in this deified humanity that believers participate through their baptism. But their participation is not effected automatically. 'It should be noted,' says Meyendorff, 'that Palamas always understands deification in a *synergistic* context.'¹¹³ At the conclusion of his discussion, he poses a key question: 'Is this participation only *analogical* or *intentional*, as the Latin scholastics would have it, in conformity with their philosophy of the created *habitus* and the divine simplicity? Or is it an *entitative* and immediate communion with the divine life itself?'¹¹⁴ Meyendorff obviously believes the latter, in which case the essence–energies distinction is necessary in order to avoid pantheism and preserve the freedom of God when he gives his grace to creatures.

It is evident that in the decades after the publication of his *Introduction* Meyendorff ceased to interpret the hesychast controversy against the grid, as de Halleux put it, of modern Christian existentialism and personalism, but he did not alter his opinion on the basic dichotomies dividing the Byzantine East from the Latin West. In his judgement, these were the result of different intellectual traditions (scholastic professionalism versus monastic theology), different methodologies (dialectical argument versus traditional patristic exegesis), and different views of the Trinity (essentialism versus personalism).¹¹⁵ These confrontational positions could not be bridged; the Latins had therefore been logically consistent in seeking the *reductio Graecorum*, the conversion of the Greeks to the Latin obedience.

The next phase of research was to explore ways of affirming compatibility between Palamas and Western modes of theological thought yet without denying that there were real differences.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ In ‘The Hellenistic Civilization and East Rome’, a lecture given in 1945 and published a decade later, Norman Baynes speaks prophetically of the strength of the Russian liturgy ‘which may yet even in the Russia of Stalin see a resurrection and reassert its claims against the propaganda of a Godless creed’ (Norman H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and other Essays* [London: The Athlone Press, 1955], 21–2). Sir Steven Runciman concludes his study of the East–West schism, published in the same year, with the fervent hope that ‘in these dark days’ even if Christendom cannot close its ranks in perfect unity, we can pray ‘that the followers of Christ should show a warmer fellowship to each other; so that if the Holy Catholic Church cannot march against the enemy as one united army, it can at least march as a company of allies bound by friendship, respect and understanding’ (Steven Runciman, *The Eastern Schism* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955], 169–70).

⁽²⁾ Jean Meyendorff, *Introduction a l’étude de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959). For the reception of the book by the scholarly world, see the comprehensive article by Daniel Stiernon, ‘Bulletin sur Palamisme’, *REB* 31 (1972), 231–341, esp. 255–61. For a rapid survey, one may also consult Norman Russell, ‘The Reception of Palamas in the West Today’, with the responses of Stavros Yangazoglou (‘Ο ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς καὶ ἡ νεώτερη δυτικὴ θεολογία’) and Ivana Noble (‘The Reception of Palamas in the West Today: A Response to Norman Russell’) in *Theologia* 83/3 (2012), 7–62.

⁽³⁾ This occurred when the Lutheran Baron Georg von Meyendorff (1794–1879), John Meyendorff’s great-grandfather, took a Greek wife and was therefore required to bring up the children as Orthodox. I owe this information to Paul Meyendorff.

⁽⁴⁾ Guiland, an expert on Nikephoros Gregoras, had succeeded his teacher Charles Diehl in the chair of Byzantine studies at the Sorbonne in 1934. Meyendorff, one of his last doctoral students, completed his thesis in the year of Guiland’s retirement (1958).

⁽⁵⁾ I am grateful to Mme Marie Meyendorff for this information.

⁽⁶⁾ Meyendorff, *Introduction*, Appendice I, 331–99.

⁽⁷⁾ Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 13.

⁽⁸⁾ Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura* (1938); Kern, *Antropologia* (1950).

⁽⁹⁾ Petit and Jugie are valued for their edition of anti-unionist texts (*Brève apologie des antiunionistes* (Paris, 1930), Laurent for his work on the second council of Blachernae (*EO* 26 [1927], 129–49), Guiland for his edition of Gregoras’ correspondence and his 1927 monograph on Gregoras, Mercati for his *Notizie* on the Kydones brothers and their associates, Loenertz for his edition of the correspondence of Demetrios Kydones, and Schirò for his work on Barlaam of Calabria. These authors are still indispensable for the study of Byzantine thought in the fourteenth century.

⁽¹⁰⁾ For the work of Krivoshein, Lossky, Kern, and Florovsky, see Chapter 2. Serge S. Verkhovskoy was the author of a recent book, *Bog i chelovek* [God and Man], published in New York in 1956. A. Brilliantov wrote a book on the Eastern influence on John Scotus Eriugena (*Vlianie vostochnago bogosloviia na Zapadnoe v proizvedeniiah Ioanna Skota Erigeny*, St Petersburg 1898), which Meyendorff describes as ‘excellent, old but still useful’

(Introduction, 282, n. 10). P. Minin published a series of articles on the different mystical strands of the Early Church in *Bogoslovskii Vestnik* (December 1911, 828–38; May 1913, 151–72; June 1914, 304–26). P. Syrku wrote a valuable book on Euthymios of Tŭrnovo and the spiritual life of fourteenth-century Bulgaria (*K istorii ispravleniia knig v Bolgarii v XIV veke, I. Vremia i zhizn patriarcha Evthymiia Ternovskago*, Saint Petersburg, 1899). I. V. Popov published an article on deification in *Voprosy filofofii i psichologii* 97 (1909), 165–213, and a study in on the life and teaching of Blessed Augustine (*Lichnost' i uchenie bl. Augustin*, Sergiev Posad, 1917). Among the few Western authors mentioned, Hans Urs von Balthasar's *Liturgie cosmique* (Paris: Aubier, 1947) is commended several times, but the most frequently cited author is Jugie, whose errors are pointed out whenever the opportunity arises.

⁽¹¹⁾ From an interview given by Meyendorff to Antoine Nivière, first published in *Service Orthodoxe de Presse* (no. 146, March 1990); translated from the original French by Fr Robert M. Arida and posted on <http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/view/niviere-a-challenging-vision-for-orthodox-christianity-in-america>. Accessed 4 November 2018.

⁽¹²⁾ For example, Meyendorff attributes to the Emperor John Kantakouzenos the *Theological Chapters addressed to the legate Paul* (Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 412). In reality these chapters are from a correspondence consisting of seven letters exchanged between John and Paul, of which letters 3 and 6 are in fact by Paul (Stiernon, 'Bulletin', 245).

⁽¹³⁾ Jean Meyendorff, (ed.), *Grégoire Palamas, Défense des saints hésychastes. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes*. Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et Documents 30 (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1959).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Jean Meyendorff, *St Grégoire Palamas et la mystique orthodoxe*. Series 'Maitres spirituels' 20. (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1959); translated into English by Adele Fiske as John Meyendorff, *St Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Antoine Guillaumont recommends it as a good introduction to the larger work in his review in the *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 159 (1961), 92–6.

⁽¹⁶⁾ R. Guiland's review of Meyendorff's *Introduction* in the *Revue des Études Grecques* 74 (1961), 347.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Stiernon ('Bulletin', 256) describes the following as subscribing fully to the author's judgement: L. G(aillard), *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 56 (1961), 1066–7; F. Halkin, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 13 (1962), 89–90; B. Leib, *Revue des sciences religieuses* 49 (1961), 152–7; H.-D. Saffrey, *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 47 (1963), 158.

⁽¹⁸⁾ M. Candal, 'Un libro nuevo sobre Gregorio Pálamas', *OCP* 26 (1960), 418–28.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Stiernon, 'Bulletin', 257.

⁽²⁰⁾ E. Behr-Sigel, 'Reflexions sur la doctrine de Grégoire Palamas', *Contacts* 12 (1960), 118–25.

⁽²¹⁾ B. Krivoshein, 'Sviatoi Grigorii Palama. Lichnost' i uchenie po nedavno opublikovannym materialam' [Saint Gregory Palamas. Personhood and doctrine according to recently published materials], *Messenger de l'exarchat du patriarche russe en Europe occidentale* 9 (1960), no. 33–4, 101–4; Stiernon, 'Bulletin', 258.

(²²) John S. Romanides, 'Notes on the Palamite Controversy and Related Topics', *GOTR* 6 (1960–1), 186–205 (part 1), and 9 (1963–4), 225–70 (part 2). Stiernon ('Bulletin', 260–1), describes this as less of a review than a presentation of opposing theses in an 'enterprise of demolition'.

(²³) *Italos* is more likely to mean 'born in Italy' than ethnically 'Italian'. The classicizing term for Italians was 'Ausones'. On ethnic labels in late Byzantium, see Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 6, 'Imperial failure and the emergence of national Hellenism'.

(²⁴) Among the many valuable publications of Antonis Fyrigos, the leading expert on Barlaam, see especially his *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 67–97.

(²⁵) John Meyendorff, trans. George Lawrence, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (Leighton Buzzard: The Faith Press, 1964), 7. Nearly all reviewers lament the omission of the valuable appendices of the French edition. Moreover, the translation is not of high quality and introduces a number of errors of its own. On these, see the review by Hilda Graef in *ECR* 1: 1 (1966), 83–4.

(²⁶) Guillaumont, review of Meyendorff's *Introduction* in the *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 96. Compare *Introduction* 198–9 with *Study*, 136–7.

(²⁷) Meyendorff, *Study*, 116, n. 1a.

(²⁸) Reinhard Flogaus, 'Inspiration–Exploitation–Distortion: The Use of St Augustine in the Hesychast Controversy', in Papanikolaou and Demacopoulos, *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*, 63–80.

(²⁹) Romanides objects to Meyendorff's claim that Palamas subjected Dionysios to a 'Christological correction'. Cf. Alexander Golitzin, 'Dionysius the Areopagite in the Works of Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a "Christological Corrective" and Related Matters', *SVTQ* 46:2 (2002), 163–90.

(³⁰) Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 327; trans. *Study*, 240 (modified).

(³¹) Recounted in *Saraband: The memoirs of E. L. Mascall* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1992), 80–4.

(³²) Mascall, *Saraband*, 83. For a considered assessment of Berdyaev's theological method, see E. L. Mascall, *He Who Is: A Study in Traditional Theism* (London: Longmans, Green, 1943), 135–7.

(³³) Mascall, *Saraband*, 187.

(³⁴) Mascall, *Saraband*, 188.

(³⁵) E. L. Mascall, *The Importance of Being Human: Some Aspects of the Christian Doctrine of Man* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 70.

(³⁶) Mascall discusses Meyendorff's presentation of Palamas in Mascall, *Openness of Being*, 221–4.

(³⁷) Mascall, *Openness of Being*, 221.

⁽³⁸⁾ E. L. Mascall, *Whatever Happened to the Human Mind? Essays in Christian Orthodoxy* (London: SPCK, 1980), 119. The appellation ‘a really great theologian’, however, is reserved for Lossky (Mascall, *Saraband*, 187).

⁽³⁹⁾ Mascall, *Openness of Being*, 221.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Mascall is referring here to the critical reappraisal of neo-Scholasticism that occurred around the time of the Second Vatican Council. Under the influence of Gilson and Maritain, many Thomists went behind the great commentators (principally Cajetan) to re-engage with Thomas himself.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Mascall, *Openness of Being*, 222.

⁽⁴²⁾ Louis Bouyer, *Le Métier de théologien: Entretiens avec Georges Daix* (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1979), 14. Lecerf and Cullman had been his teachers at the Universities of Paris and Strasbourg, respectively.

⁽⁴³⁾ Louis Bouyer, *Mémoires* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2014), 56. (Bulgakov, he says, preached in a correct but heavily accented English, the medium which he habitually used for his contacts with the West.)

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Bouyer’s two trilogies, the first on the divine economy, *Création et Salut* (*Le Trône de la Sagesse* [1957], *L’Église de Dieu, Corps du Christ et Temple de l’Ésprit* [1970], and *Cosmos: la Gloire divine et l’Univers* [1982]), the second on theology proper, *Connaissance de Dieu* (*Le Fils éternel* [1974], *Le Père invisible* [1976], and *Le Consolateur* [1980]) were inspired by Bulgakov’s two trilogies, the ‘lesser’ and the ‘greater’, now translated into English, largely through the labours of Boris Jakim; Bouyer, *Métier*, 188–90.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Bouyer, *Mémoires*, 74–5.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Louis Bouyer, ‘Byzantine Spirituality’, 547. (The French original of ‘Byzantine Spirituality’ was published in Paris by Éditions du Cerf in 1961.)

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Bouyer, ‘Byzantine Spirituality’, 585.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Bouyer, ‘Byzantine Spirituality’, 588.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 316–22.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Bouyer refers the reader to the articles by Nadal and Houdret in the 1974 Palamas issue of *Istina* discussed below.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 320.

⁽⁵²⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 13–14.

⁽⁵³⁾ See, for example, Reinhard Flogaus, ‘Inspiration—Exploitation—Distortion’, where Flogaus insists that the discovery is his own.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 321–2.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 317.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 321.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964), § 8.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ The Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* (21 November 1964), § 4.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ The twelve-man Catholic delegation to the Commission included Bernard Dupuy O.P., the director of *Istina*, and Emmanuel Lanne, O.S.B., the editor of *Irénikon*. Joseph Ratzinger was also a member.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 11.

⁽⁶¹⁾ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, § 17.

⁽⁶²⁾ André de Halleux, 'Palamisme et Scolastique'. In the following year, de Halleux was appointed consultant to the Pontifical Secretariat for Christian Unity.

⁽⁶³⁾ De Halleux, 'Palamisme et Scolastique', 433.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ De Halleux, 'Palamisme et Scolastique', 439.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ De Halleux, 'Palamisme et Scolastique', 429.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ This was at the same time as d'Herbigny's campaign against Dom Lambert Beauduin. The Dominicans fell in with d'Herbigny's plans more readily than the Benedictines. On this, see Tretjakewitsch, *Bishop Michel d'Herbigny SJ and Russia*, 197–228.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Jean-Philippe Houdret, OCD, 'Palamas et les Cappadociens', *Istina* 19 (1974), 260–71.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Jean-Miguel Garrigues, OP, 'L'énergie divine et la grâce chez Maxime le Confesseur', *Istina* 19 (1974), 272–96.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Juan Sergio Nadal, SJ, 'La critique par Akindynos de l'herméneutique patristique de Palamas', *Istina* 19 (1974), 297–328.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ M.-J. Le Guillou, OP, 'Lumière et charité dans la doctrine palamite de la divinisation', *Istina* 19 (1974), 329–38.

⁽⁷¹⁾ *Istina* 19 (1974), 258–9.

⁽⁷²⁾ Le Guillou, 'Lumière et charité', 337.

⁽⁷³⁾ Le Guillou, 'Lumière et charité', 337. Le Guillou seems to have received these ideas from Jean-Miguel Garrigues, who was his doctoral student.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Houdret, 'Palamas et les Capadociens', 266.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Houdret, 'Palamas et les Capadociens', 270.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ The thesis, entitled 'Naître de Dieu dans la charité', was published in a revised form with a preface by Le Guillou, as *Maxime le Confesseur. La charité, avenir divin de l'homme* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1976).

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Garrigues, 'L'énergie divine', 296.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Nadal, 'La critique par Akindynos', 328.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ André de Halleux, 'Palamisme et tradition', *Irénikon* 48 (1975), 479–93.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Georges Barrois, 'Palamism Revisited', *SVTQ* 19 (1975), 211–31; Christos Yannaras, 'The Distinction Between Essence and Energies and its Importance for Theology', *SVTQ* 19 (1975), 232–45.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Barrois, 'Palamas Revisited', 214. Pope Paul VI had apparently refused the request after consulting what for him was the standard work on Palamas' teaching, Martin

Jugie's *Theologia dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium ab ecclesia catholica dissidentium* (Paris, 1926–35).

⁽⁸²⁾ Barrois, 'Palamas Revisited', 229.

⁽⁸³⁾ Barrois, 'Palamas Revisited', 230. Curiously, according to the obituary of Barrois published on the French Dominican website, Barrois eventually joined not the Orthodox, as one might have expected, but the Presbyterians.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Yannaras, 'Distinction', 245.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Yannaras, 'Distinction', 241.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ Dom Illtyd Trethowan, 'Irrationality in Theology and the Palamite Distinction', *ECR* 9:1–2 (1977), 19–26.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Rowan D. Williams, 'The Philosophical Structures of Palamism', *ECR* 9:1–2 (1977), 27–44.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, 'The Debate about Palamism', *ECR* 9:1–2 (1977), 45–63.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Kallistos Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed: The Apophatic Way and the Essence-Energies Distinction', *ECR* 7/2 (1975), 125–36.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed', 132.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Trethowan adds in a footnote: 'We cannot *explain* it. It is only in the light of it that explanations can be given at all.' (Emphasis original.)

⁽⁹²⁾ Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed', 133.

⁽⁹³⁾ Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed', 129.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed', 134.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Ware, 'God Hidden and Revealed', 135.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Trethowan, 'Irrationality', 23. Trethowan adds here in a footnote: 'No contradiction is possible in experience itself. Contradiction does arise when something is alleged contrary to what our direct awareness has told us to be true. Not to reject it would be irrational.'

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Williams, 'Philosophical Structures', 38.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Williams, 'Philosophical Structures', 29.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Ware, 'Debate', 46–7.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Ware, 'Debate', 52–3.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Trethowan, 'Irrationality', 22.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Ware, 'Debate', 53.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Ware, 'Debate', 56–7.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Ware, 'Debate', 58.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ For a (still negative) critique that takes Williams's philosophical points more seriously, see David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 268–71. Bradshaw argues (a) that Williams has

misread Proclus, and (b) that the Neoplatonist unparticipated–participated distinction is not Palamas’ source for his teaching on essence and energies.

(¹⁰⁶) John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm: historical, theological and social problems* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1974), Introduction.

(¹⁰⁷) For example, John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), where Meyendorff continues to regard Barlaam as ‘probably influenced by Nominalism’ (103); *idem*, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1975), where he argues that the essence of the debate concerned the defence of the experiential reality of deification against an intellectualist version of Christianity (171–2, 195, 202–5); *idem*, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981; reprinted by St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1989), chapter 5, ‘Victory of the Hesychasts in Byzantium: ideological and political consequences’, where he presents the hesychast controversy as ‘a crisis of civilization’, reflecting what German historians call a *zeitwende*. In Meyendorff’s view the fourteenth century was a turning-point for Orthodoxy in the sense that the victory of the hesychastic wing of monasticism marginalized the ‘humanists’, who were the bearers of Hellenic culture, forcing many of them into the arms of the Latin Church. Henceforth the Orthodox Church, dominated by monastic zealots, was ‘in many ways, a more powerful body than the impoverished Empire’ (103), and promoted the ideal of the Orthodox *oikoumene* among the Slavs much more effectively than the imperial government.

(¹⁰⁸) Jean Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, in *DS* 12, fasc. 1 (1984), 81–107.

(¹⁰⁹) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 93.

(¹¹⁰) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 93.

(¹¹¹) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 95.

(¹¹²) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 96.

(¹¹³) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 97.

(¹¹⁴) Meyendorff, ‘Palamas (Grégoire)’, 105.

(¹¹⁵) This is stated most succinctly in John Meyendorff, ‘Theology in the Thirteenth Century: Methodological Contrasts’, in J. Chrysostomides (ed.), *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΕΙΑ* (Festschrift Joan Hussey) (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1988), 395–407.

New directions since Meyendorff

Meyendorff's work was the catalyst for a vast increase in the number of scholarly publications on the hesychast controversy and its historical, philosophical, and theological context. This increase did not of course occur overnight, but gathered momentum gradually as the full corpus of texts of Palamas and his contemporaries became available. By the end of the twentieth century, our understanding of the intellectual climate of the mid-fourteenth century had been considerably enriched by the researches of Byzantinists, intellectual historians, and theologians, whose accumulation of work has given us a much more nuanced view of Palamite theology than was possible in 1959. In the twenty-first century, this work has enabled several theologians and philosophers to bring Palamas into today's theological debates, despite the fact that Palamite theology is still regarded by many in the West with considerable suspicion. In this chapter, I shall attempt to trace the course of these developments in the different fields of research that have contributed towards them.

Broadening the Accessibility of the Texts

New projects were set in train not only by Meyendorff's *Introduction* but also by his critical edition of the *Triads*, which was published by the University of Louvain a few months before his major study of Palamas' thought. At a conference held in Thessaloniki in 1959 to mark the sixth centenary of the death of St Gregory, the decision was taken to publish a critical edition of the complete works of Gregory Palamas under the direction of Panagiotis Christou (1917–1995), Professor of Patristics at Thessaloniki's Aristotle University. The first volume of a planned six, which appeared in 1962, contained the text of the *Triads* established by Meyendorff, along with Palamas' early correspondence, his two apodictic treatises, and his refutation of John Bekkos.¹ Reviewers welcomed the project (p.99) (even if this initial volume contained only one previously unpublished text, Palamas' second letter to Barlaam), but found that it did not measure up to the highest standards expected of such publications. The first volume was criticized on codicological grounds by Darrouzès for lacking a discussion of the reasons for choosing the base manuscript,² and by Candal for printing all nine discourses of the *Triads* under the title *In Defence of the Holy Hesychasts* when the manuscript tradition only accorded that title to the first two *Triads*.³ In the second volume, published in 1966, Christou responds to his critics by belatedly setting out the criteria governing the choice and order of Palamas' writings, but fails to provide a discussion of the manuscript tradition and the problems encountered in establishing the text. This he promises to do in the final volume. It is clear that Christou simply wrote the introductions of the volumes and left the actual work of editing to junior colleagues. Nevertheless, even if they failed to satisfy the experts, these volumes did at least make a significant portion of the corpus of Palamas' writings accessible for the first time to interested scholars.

After the publication in 1970 of the third volume in this series, there was a long hiatus.⁴ In the absence of further texts, the Canadian Basilian monk, Robert Sinkewicz, embarked independently on a critical edition of one of the most important of Palamas' writings, *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, which he published in 1988.⁵ As he explains in his Preface,⁶ the only printed edition until the publication of his own was that of the eighteenth-century *Philokalia* by Nikodemos the Hagiorite and Makarios of Corinth, who had based their text on an inferior manuscript and in any case had edited it to make it more suitable for

spiritual reading by excising all references to Barlaam and Akindynos.⁷ When the Thessaloniki edition was resumed in 1988, Sinkewicz's impeccably edited text (without, of course, its *en face* English translation) was included in the fifth volume, published in 1992, with some minor alterations.⁸

The Thessaloniki volumes are not easy to use. Even Darrouzès had regretted the absence of facing-page translations and had pointed out that the lack of (p.100) running titles at the head of the page made finding texts difficult. Help arrived finally (after the passage of forty years) from an unexpected quarter. The Italian psychoanalyst, Ettore Perrella, first came across the name of Gregory Palamas through his reading of Lossky's *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*.⁹ To his intense surprise he found that the passages from Palamas cited by Lossky suggested solutions to numerous difficult theoretical problems that had arisen for him in the daily practice of his profession.¹⁰ He then read everything by Palamas available at that time in Italian or French,¹¹ and his interest in Palamas became deeper. His next step was to visit Thessaloniki, where he bought the five available volumes (the planned sixth was published in 2015) of Christou's edition of the texts. His study of these volumes convinced him of the value of Palamas for researchers in his own field of psychoanalysis:

From its origins psychoanalysis has always made the problem of the limits of scientific knowledge a central concern. Indeed, if psychoanalysis has, on the one hand, always referred to modern science as the discipline's immediate logical presupposition, it has, on the other, even prior to being a general or formal branch of knowledge, always been a practical discipline, and therefore in contrast to the classic sciences—that is to say to the modern sciences—it has never been able to consider the difficult question—which today is posed ever more frequently—of the nature of the relationship between science and ethics as something external to its own concerns. It is understood perfectly well that this is not simply a psychoanalytical problem, or even a scientific one, because it is fundamentally a philosophical problem: not to acknowledge that would only signify a desire to keep the problem unresolved or to condemn science—and along with it an epistemology that considers it justified not to pose metaphysical questions—to a circularity that is only another name for scepticism.¹²

As a psychoanalyst with a Lacanian background, Perrella was especially attracted by the insights that the language of Palamas' defence of hesychasm offered into the structures shaping inter-subjective relations. But he was also convinced more broadly that Palamas' gnosiology and metaphysics could contribute to a unified understanding of different aspects of reality that would (p.101) be helpful not only to practitioners of psychoanalysis but also to philosophers. This conviction led him to embark upon an ambitious publishing project: the complete works of Palamas in Greek, with an Italian translation on the facing page. Perrella's edition has been published by Bompiani of Milan in three convenient volumes at a price affordable by individuals.¹³ The Greek text is simply that of the Christou edition, but in most other respects, Darrouzès' desiderata have been satisfied. Not only are there running headings throughout, but also subheadings have been provided in the Italian version, a translation which is largely the work of Perrella himself with the assistance of a team of able colleagues. These volumes, a direct result of the work of Lossky and Meyendorff, are a great boon to students of Palamas.

Deepening our Understanding of the Historical Context

The fourteenth century is extraordinarily rich in Greek documentary sources. Historical narratives, patriarchal acts, synodal tomes, saints' lives, testimonies of faith, official and private letters—all shed light in various ways on the complex relationships that existed on Mount Athos between different monastic groups and between them and important figures in the patriarchal and imperial courts. We do not yet possess a detailed history of Athos for this period.¹⁴ But some fascinating insights into aspects concerning the hesychast controversy have been provided by recent scholars, notably by Antonio Rigo, Professor of Byzantine Philology and Christianity at the University of Venice Ca' Foscari.

Rigo's researches into the penetration of Athos by Bogomilism, a dualist heresy of Manichaean origin that became established in the Balkans in the eleventh century, have made it clear why Barlaam's accusation of Messalianism (i.e. Bogomilism) rang such loud alarm bells on Mount Athos.¹⁵ Rigo rightly (p.102) warns against working with heresiological stereotypes, which is easy to do, he says, but risks basing resemblances on imaginary constructions (*fantasmi*).¹⁶ Certainly, it was easy to accuse monks who may simply have been radical hesychasts of following Bogomil doctrines. Nevertheless, there was a group on Mount Athos whose beliefs resembled those of the Bogomils very closely. This group provoked a major crisis in the 1340s. Rigo's reconstruction of events is as follows.¹⁷

The origins of this heretical group lie in Thessaloniki, where a nun called Irene Porine ran a hostel for visiting Athonite monks. There is no doubt that Irene held Bogomil beliefs and saw her work as giving her an opportunity to proselytize. She is known to have been in contact with Gregory Palamas, who had left Athos in 1326 and spent a few months in Thessaloniki before going on to Beroia, and also with Isidore Boucheiras, the future Palamite patriarch (1347–1350), who was then still a layman living an ascetic life in Thessaloniki with a group of disciples. One of the members of Isidore's *hetaireia* was George of Larissa, who was then still Orthodox but was later to be convicted of Bogomilism. In 1341, with the beginning of civil war in the empire, Isidore left Thessaloniki for Constantinople and his *hetaireia* was disbanded. Not long afterwards, George was forced to leave Thessaloniki and went to Mount Athos, where he was tonsured as a monk at the Great Lavra.

In this period, the practice of hesychasm on Athos was based in the hermitages around the Lavra. In the early 1340s, however, there was a malaise at the Lavra.¹⁸ It was a time of the absence of strong central leadership. The *protos* of the Holy Mountain, Isaac of Anapausa, was absent in Constantinople on a mission of mediation in the civil war.¹⁹ The *hegoumenos* of the Lavra, Makarios, who was a member of the mission, was rewarded in the spring of 1342 by being made metropolitan of Thessaloniki. At about the same time Philotheos Kokkinos and another senior monk, Iakobos Maroules, also left the Lavra, apparently dissatisfied with the state of affairs there, and went to Thessaloniki. The indiscipline that arose in these circumstances was noted in Karyes, the administrative centre of Athos. Towards the end of 1343, a commission of senior monks was appointed to investigate the situation, especially the problems at the Lavra and similar ones that had arisen at Esphigmenou. The work of the commission was disrupted by the capture of its four members by Turkish pirates while they were making a visitation of Vatopedi, but eventually the commission was able to (p.103) present its report. The result was the *katholike synaxis* (general assembly) held at the Protaton at Karyes in the autumn of 1344.

The assembly was presided over by the metropolitan of Hierissos (the ordinary of Mount Athos) and the *hegoumenoi* of the leading monasteries.²⁰ The group of a dozen or so monks accused of Bogomilism included Greeks (no fewer than six from the Lavra), Serbs, and Bulgars. The leader of the group was a Lavriot monk, Joseph of Crete. Some of the accused went into hiding, others defended their doctrines, none more eloquently than Joseph himself. They were finally condemned on charges of hostility to the use of icons, denial of the utility of baptism and communion, and refusal to acknowledge the Incarnation and the Resurrection—in other words, for rejecting the entire ‘economy of the flesh’. They were also found guilty of lewdness and obscenity, the standard charge levelled against heretics of all types. All the condemned were banished from the Holy Mountain. The secular authorities must also have been called in, for George of Larissa, who at the Lavra had become a disciple of Joseph of Crete, was also branded with a cross on his face. These events were reported to Constantinople in an official letter.²¹

Rigo doubts whether the condemned monks were consciously Bogomil heretics. They may possibly have thought of themselves as radical hesychasts who denied the value of sacramental means of sanctification because they held that it was an ecstatic form of prayer alone that led to identification with Christ.²² The deification of the Christian was, of course, a perfectly orthodox teaching, but Joseph of Crete went far beyond what was orthodox in promoting a mystical theory of complete identification.²³ Rigo believes that Joseph’s spiritual teaching, whether he intended it or not, did in fact imply a Christology that was ‘effectively Bogomil’.²⁴

Despite the expulsion of Joseph and his associates from Athos, the affair was damaging to the reputation of Palamas and the Athonite hesychasts. In November of the same year Isidore was deposed as metropolitan-elect (ὑποψήφιος) of Monemvasia by the patriarch John Kalekas and Palamas was excommunicated—ostensibly for reasons entirely unconnected with the Bogomil affair on Athos, but the timing is perhaps significant. More certainly significant is the fact that neither Gregory Palamas nor Philotheos Kokkinos ever refer (p.104) to the affair.²⁵ Clearly, the condemnation of a number of Athonite monks as Bogomils (especially monks with whom Palamas had been in contact) remained for them a sensitive issue. Palamas’ opponents, however, found useful ammunition in the affair. Before the condemnation of the Joseph of Crete and his associates, the hesychast controversy was conducted almost entirely on the doctrinal level. This changed after 1344. In a letter of 1345 addressed to Iakobos Koukounares (Isidore’s successor as metropolitan of Monemvasia), Gregory Akindynos gives a brief account of the events of 1344 in which he insists that ‘Messalianism is part of Palamas’ whole heresy’, claiming that Isidore and Palamas had both praised the nun Irene Porine as a prophetess.²⁶ When Nikephoros Gregoras entered the hesychast controversy after the council of 1347, he went much further than Akindynos, recounting the events of 1344 in detail in his *Antirrhetics* and accusing Palamas of having been a disciple on Athos of both Joseph of Crete and George of Larissa.²⁷ As this was chronologically impossible, he corrected it later in his *Historia Byzantina*, but the association of Palamas with ‘Messalianism’ stuck.

Palamas’ connection with the ‘Messalian’ current on Mount Athos also features in an important analysis of the early stages of the hesychast controversy recently presented by Juan Nadal Cañellas.²⁸ Nadal, who made his début in Palamite studies with his valuable contribution on Gregory Akindynos to the 1974 Palamas edition of *Istina*,²⁹ worked until the end of his life to rehabilitate Akindynos not only as a theologian but also as a man of high personal integrity. He objects to the ‘profound contempt’ that Meyendorff had for Akindynos and reproaches him for an over-zealous defence of ‘Palamas’ ideological positions’.³⁰ His

own view of Palamas is thoroughly negative. He accuses him of having been, with Isidore Boucheiras and Philotheos Kokkinos, a member of the heretical circle in Thessaloniki of Irene Porine, and of developing his theological ideas based on the 'Messalian' doctrine of this circle. His final judgement of him as a person is damning:

Too sure of himself, highly ambitious—Akindynos often accuses him of pride—but a coward, he often throws a stone and hides his arm. First he says that he is calumniated, then he is seen forced to acknowledge that of which he has been accused, but he avoids his responsibilities under the pretext of personal integrity. (p.105) And this happens more than once. For him all means are good, so long as they lead to what he wants: false promises, lies, calumnies, different versions of the same event, personal attacks. He has an innate taste for politics.³¹

This judgement is the result of a detailed analysis of the two synods of June and July 1341,³² which Nadal sees as a charade, or rather, as a Pirandello play in which the actors play out the gulf between fiction and reality.³³ The credibility of this analysis, argued consistently from the perspective of Akindynos, is something to which we shall return.

Twenty years later there was another crisis, originating at the Lavra. A new monastic dispute concerning Palamite theology flared up in 1364 which initiated the last phase of the hesychast controversy. This has been the subject of an important historical study, again by Antonio Rigo.³⁴ The dispute centred on the Lavriot monk Prochoros Kydones, brother of the powerful *mesazon* (chief minister) of the emperor John V Palaiologos, Demetrios Kydones. Prochoros scandalized the hesychasts of the Lavra, who were deeply devoted to the memory of Gregory Palamas, by an attack on the Synodal Tome of 1351 and on Palamas' essence–energies distinction. The hesychasts broke off communion with Prochoros and reported him to the patriarch, who was now the ex-Lavriot, Philotheos Kokkinos. The *hegoumenos* of the Lavra, Iakobos Trikanas, also wrote to the patriarch, but Philotheos took no action until Prochoros himself appealed to him. Philotheos responded cautiously, asking a senior metropolitan, Theophanes of Nicaea, to head a commission of enquiry into Prochoros' theological opinions. But before the commission could finish its work, Prochoros precipitated the denouement of the affair by writing from Constantinople to Trikanas towards the end of 1367 to denounce the honouring of Palamas at the Lavra as saint. The Holy Mountain reacted by holding a *katholike synaxis* which anathematized Prochoros as a heretic. A trial by the home synod of Constantinople followed in the spring of 1368 which not only condemned Prochoros but formally inscribed Palamas among the saints.

In his study, Rigo investigates the background of these events, demonstrating how complex the internal dynamics of the Lavra were at this time. First of all, the *hegoumenos* Iakobos Trikanas was himself a controversial figure. His election to the hegoumenate in about 1360 was the occasion of such intense (p.106) rivalry among different factions at the Lavra that the intervention of the patriarch Kallistos I was required before the resulting disturbances could be resolved by the expulsion of Trikanas' opponents (supporters of the previous *hegoumenos*, Niphon).³⁵ Three or four years later there was another problem of a disciplinary nature concerning a monk called Moses Phakrases, who appealed to the patriarch, claiming he had been condemned without a hearing.³⁶ The case of Prochoros was not an isolated one.

Secondly, there was a political dimension to the affair. This was a period of exceptional instability in the Balkans, with the disintegration of the Serbian empire of Stefan Uroš IV Dušan upon his death in 1355, and the attempt by his son Stefan Uroš V to hold on to some of his possessions in former Byzantine territory. Trikanas was a supporter of Serbian suzerainty over Athos. Demetrios Kydones calls him 'a servant of the queen of Serbia' (i.e. of

Helena, Stefan Uroš V's mother),³⁷ and indeed there are documents in the Lavra's archives which prove a close relationship at this time between the Lavra and Helena.³⁸ The Kydones family, on the other hand, were naturally supporters of Byzantine rule, and through Demetrios exercised considerable political influence. A letter of Demetrios to George Synadenos Astras, governor of Lemnos, dating from early 1365 asks him to intervene at the Lavra on Prochoros' behalf.³⁹ But Synadenos Astras died of the plague a few months later before being able to oblige Demetrios, and so Prochoros was deprived of valuable support.

As the patriarch Philotheos had been a monk at the Lavra, there is no doubt that he was *au courant* with the situation there. He was wary of taking hasty action, knowing that Prochoros had supporters elsewhere on the Holy Mountain as well as enemies at the Lavra. It was not until he returned to the patriarchal throne in October 1364 after the resignation imposed upon him ten years previously that he became fully resolved to enforce the decisions of the council of 1351. As Rigo points out, whereas the hesychasts of the Lavra were determined from the beginning to apply the decisions of the synodal tome of 1351 with canonical exactitude (*akribeia*), the patriarch and the metropolitans were 'more inclined to solutions that were more "economic"'.⁴⁰ In the event, it was Prochoros himself who forced their hand.⁴¹

(p.107) Rigo demonstrates that three interacting power centres were at play in this affair: the political world of the Kydones family, the entourage of the patriarch, and monastic circles on Athos: 'The destiny of Prochoros was in the hands of this triangle.'⁴² The Kydones family could bring pressure to bear on Mount Athos and on the Lavra in particular. Rigo observes that things began to go badly for Prochoros only after the death of his influential protector, George Synadenos Astras.⁴³ It was then that he came under duress both on Athos and at Constantinople. Rigo's work warns us that our discussions of the theological debates are likely to be skewed unless we take into account the often subtle workings of the different social networks in play.

Exploring the Thinking of Palamas' Contemporaries

At the conclusion of his study, Rigo is careful to emphasize that the historical reconstruction of events is only a first and necessary stage of the study of the Prochoros affair. The second stage is the 'Prochoros of the texts':

Only an edition of his writings (in the first place of the *De essentia et operatione*—with a study of its Thomist sources—and of the opusculum on apophatic and cataphatic theology) will permit an overall evaluation of his theology, of the decisive importance of Thomism and other Western Fathers, and of his doctrine on the light of the Transfiguration and on Christology.⁴⁴

The required edition still awaits completion.⁴⁵ On the other hand, many critical texts of authors both hostile to Palamas and supportive of him have been published since Meyendorff's work, which enables us to gain a fuller understanding of Palamas' moves in the complex theological debates of the **(p.108)** fourteenth century. Among the anti-Palamites, these texts include Fyrigos's edition of Barlaam's letters,⁴⁶ Hero's edition of Akindynos' letters,⁴⁷ Nadal's edition of Akindynos' refutation of Palamas' *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Palamite*,⁴⁸ Beyer's edition of Gregoras' *Antirrhetics*,⁴⁹ and Polemis's edition of the works of Theodore Dexius and of a treatise by George of Pelagonia.⁵⁰ Among the Palamites, we now have Kaimakis's edition of the dogmatic works of Philotheos Kokkinos, along with Tsames's edition of the hagiographic works of the same author,⁵¹ and

of the writings of Joseph Kalothetos,⁵² Voordeckers and Tinnefeld's edition of John Kantakouzenos' refutation of Prochoros Kydones,⁵³ and editions by Sotiropoulos and Polemis of some of the writings of Theophanes of Nicaea.⁵⁴ A major theologian who was sympathetic to Palamite teaching but did not take up a polemical position was Nicholas Kabasilas Chamaetos, whose principal works have been edited by several different scholars.⁵⁵ Another (p.109) important author is Theoleptos of Philadelphia, claimed by Palamas as one of his spiritual teachers, whose *Monastic Discourses* have been edited and translated by Sinkewicz.⁵⁶ The appearance of these works alongside several important earlier publications, principally Mercati's still indispensable *Notizie*,⁵⁷ and Loenertz's editions of the correspondence of Demetrios Kydones and Manuel Kalekas,⁵⁸ has rendered the corpus of edited texts relating to the Palamite controversy immeasurably richer and more varied than it was at the time of the publication of Meyendorff's *Introduction*.

One of the striking new discoveries made as a result of these publications is the extent to which the Kydones brothers' translations of Thomas Aquinas were used not only by anti-Palamites but also by defenders of Palamite doctrine.⁵⁹ The main work in this field has been done by Ioannis Polemis, who has made a detailed study of the prominent Palamite, Theophanes of Nicaea.⁶⁰ In an article published in 1989 Polemis signals the probable source of some of Theophanes' ideas in the writings of Thomas Aquinas.⁶¹ Seven years later in his important monograph on Theophanes he is much more confident about Theophanes' dependence on Aquinas, arguing persuasively that Theophanes formulated his views on the divine vision under the direct influence of Aquinas, whom he had read in the Greek translations of the *Summa contra Gentiles* and parts of the *Summa theologiae* by the (p.110) Kydones brothers.⁶² This leads Theophanes, Polemis claims, to adopt positions incompatible with the teaching of Gregory Palamas. Thus, in accordance with Aquinas but in contrast to Palamas, Theophanes argues that the vision of God belongs to the second stage of a tripartite division of knowledge,⁶³ that such a vision is attained by means of the intellect, that sinners too will experience the divine light (only in their case they will experience it as the fire of hell),⁶⁴ and that the deification of the just does not extend to infinity (by *epektasis*) but is the satisfaction of all desire and all contemplation.⁶⁵ In Polemis's view 'the fundamental point in which Theophanes seems to concur with Aquinas is in his view that the essence of God is identical with His intellect'.⁶⁶ Polemis believes that Theophanes did not deliberately attempt to synthesize Palamite and Thomist positions but made an ad hoc use of Aquinas 'unaware of the fact that the differences between scholasticism and Palamism are not superficial'.⁶⁷

Meyendorff held that Theophanes was only nominally a Palamite.⁶⁸ Polemis accepts that he was a Palamite theologian but an inept one. We should not, of course, expect to find systematic theologians (a Western scholastic genre) among the Palamites, but Polemis is right to expect logical consistency. The Palamites, admittedly, could use arguments heuristically, sometimes without concern for their overall coherence. Palamas himself was caught out in this respect by Barlaam and later by Gregoras. On the other hand, philosophical thought was important to them. As Polemis has again shown, Theophanes was quite capable of constructing a treatise marked by a rigorous logical structure. This is his *On the Eternity of Beings*, written between 1364 and 1376 ostensibly to demonstrate that the world has not existed from all eternity but in reality to defend Palamas' essence-energies distinction.⁶⁹

The treatise is presented in the form of forty-four chapters, each being a proposition which Theophanes defends by traditional arguments and copious references to the Fathers, particularly those Fathers of special importance to the Palamites, namely, Basil the Great,

Dionysius the Areopagite, and Maximus the Confessor. But although the arguments are traditional, the way in which Theophanes presents them owes much to the Greek translations of Thomas Aquinas, with objections and responses set out in the Scholastic manner. The (p.111) influence of contemporary theological debates is also evident. As Polemis says, it seems that what Theophanes wanted to do was to examine a traditional theme from a new perspective.⁷⁰ This enables him to develop the following argument: The creative energy of God is participable; therefore it can construct products similar to itself—that is to say, products that are eternal. Created beings, however, cannot derive either from the divine essence or from the divine energy, but only from non-being. Creation therefore is not co-eternal with God. It exists and becomes good through participation in the goodness of God, exhibiting thus the relation of a participant to the participated. Having presented arguments for the finitude of beings, Theophanes goes on in the last section of his treatise (Chapters 36–44) to answer the anti-Palamite objection that creation by the divine energy would entail the eternity of created beings. Like Maximus the Confessor, Theophanes distinguishes between the βούλησις of God (his will as purpose) and his θέλησις (his will as a faculty). If creation occurred by the θέλησις of God and not by his βούλησις, then it would indeed be eternal. But βούλησις is a relation that links the creator with the creature; it has a beginning and an end, and is identified with the act of creation. The act of creation is therefore itself created. What can help us understand this is the distinction between active and passive motion. God’s creative motion first creates a passive motion, which then results in the appearance of matter. The passive motion lies between the uncreated divine energy and matter, linking them, and is thus the created element through which God creates. This distinction means that creatures do not participate in God’s eternity; they are simply finite images of God’s eternal wisdom. Accordingly, when Maximus speaks of human beings becoming what God is, he is using relative terms to indicate a mutable likeness to God. Palamite teaching on the divine energies does not blur the distinction between God and the creature.

Theophanes’ distinction between an absolute non-relational energy and a finite relational energy (finite because it ceased to operate on the seventh day of creation) is not found in Palamas. It seems, rather, to reflect Aquinas’ distinction between uncreated and created grace. Theophanes was not rejecting Palamite doctrine. He was simply trying to fill a theological gap, for Palamas had not given consideration to the consequences of his theory of the divine energies for the doctrine of creation.⁷¹ This was a gap exploited by the anti-Palamite contemporaries of Theophanes. In Polemis’s view, Theophanes’ work is an example of the fruitful synthesis between Eastern and Western thinking that more able theologians might have been able to accomplish had not been for the fall of Constantinople in 1453.⁷²

Investigating Palamas’ Philosophical Structures

(p.112) The study of Byzantine philosophy is a relatively new discipline.⁷³ It began just after the Second World War when Émile Bréhier invited Basil Tatakis to contribute a volume on Byzantium to his multi-volume *Histoire de la philosophie*. Published in 1949 as *La philosophie byzantine*, Tatakis’s work has still not been superseded.⁷⁴ In the section that he devotes to the hesychast controversy, he gives an excellent summary, from a viewpoint sympathetic to Palamas, of how the debate unfolded.⁷⁵ He does not see the controversy, however, as seriously concerned with philosophical issues. Noting Feodor Uspensky’s opinion of the hesychast controversy as fundamentally a philosophical dispute between Aristotelians and Platonists, he grants that there is some merit in this because both sides frequently refer to Greek philosophical thought, but in his judgement ‘the hesychast

controversy began and ended as a purely theological dispute'.⁷⁶ It did not engage in philosophical debate in any significant way.

With regard to Palamas himself, Tataakis, of course, was relying on the inadequate selection of texts included in Migne, and the homilies published by Kleopas and Oikonomos. The immense progress that has been made since the publication of Tataakis's book in the publication and study not only of Palamas' *oeuvre* but also of contemporary philosophical texts has enabled us to position Palamas more precisely in the philosophical debates of his age. In the early fourteenth century, there was a strong revival of interest in Aristotle.⁷⁷ George Pachymeres (1242–1310), a polymath historian and patriarchal official, produced an influential epitome of almost the whole of the Aristotelian corpus, known (p.113) as the Φιλοσοφία. Nikephoros Choumnos (1250/5–1327), a chief minister of Andronikos II, wrote an anti-Platonic treatise entitled 'On matter and the ideas'.⁷⁸ Theodore Metochites, also a chief minister of Andronikos II and a bitter rival of Nikephoros Choumnos, commented on much of Aristotle (though not on his logical works).⁷⁹ Of equal erudition but of less exalted social status was the monk Joseph Rhakendytes (1260?–c.1330), who in the last decade of his life published an immense encyclopaedia which included a section on logic drawn from a scholar of the previous generation, Nikephoros Blemmydes. Another scholar contemporary with Choumnos and Metochites was John Pediasimos, 'consul of the philosophers', who wrote commentaries on the *Prior Analytics* and part of the *Posterior Analytics*.⁸⁰ This renewed study of Aristotle was to play an important role in the hesychast controversy.

Gregory Palamas, whose father was a trusted counsellor of Andronikos II, was at home in these learned circles. His encomiast, Philotheos Kokkinos, tells us that he had been a pupil of Theodore Metochites and repeats the following anecdote:

He [Gregory] also distinguished himself in physics and logic—in a word, in all Aristotelian studies—so much so that the man most admired for his abundant wisdom and learning by everyone at that time, who skilfully managed affairs between the emperor and the common Roman people, I mean the Grand Logothete [Theodore Metochites], once in the presence of the emperor began a discussion with Gregory on Aristotle's treatment of logic, and was so struck by what he heard the youth utter that he could not contain himself or conceal his admiration but turning to the emperor in amazement said: 'Even Aristotle himself, if he were present and had heard this young man, would in my opinion praise him more than a little. And I would here add,' he went on to say, 'that those who study philosophical treatises, especially the complex works of Aristotle, should possess such a spirit and aptitude'.⁸¹

The connection with Metochites sheds an interesting light on the way in which Palamas was to conduct his debate with Barlaam. Although an expert on Aristotle, Metochites did not place much reliance on Aristotelian logic. He admired Aristotle's technical competence in logic and natural philosophy,⁸² (p.114) but as a guide to metaphysical truth he much preferred 'the wonderful Plato'.⁸³ In fact, most of the work on Aristotle by Byzantine scholars in this period was done with the aid of the Neoplatonic commentaries of Philoponos, Ammonius, Simplicius, and others. Metochites was no exception. In his opinion, Aristotle could teach us about the natural sciences but theology was Plato's domain.⁸⁴ In our world of ceaseless flux, nothing remains immutable and subject to definitive knowledge. Those who chase after knowledge by observation of a world that is in constant motion only experience error and perplexity:

Nothing can be discovered with absolute security, except indeed wisdom about God and divine things alone, which assuredly comes from some divinely borne inspiration (ἐξ ἐπιπνοίας τινὸς θεοφορήτου) —where else can it come from or through what compelling syllogistic modes and proofs? [...] only those things quite beyond the reach of philosophy concerning God himself and the divine, which are evidently grasped by us from God, remain, by the power of truth, doctrines worthy of full respect and full certainty.⁸⁵

Logic for Metochites is of no use at all for illuminating the nature of ultimate reality.⁸⁶

These views were shared by another of Metochites' pupils, Nikephoros Gregoras, who was to become a bitter opponent of Palamas after the council of 1351.⁸⁷ By its own powers, the mind cannot reach God. As in Metochites' case, this is an ἀγνώσιον which has come directly from Neoplatonism, not from Dionysian apophaticism. The bodily vision of God, such as the hesychasts claim to attain, is only for the less perfect. It is to remain stuck on the level of created symbols and must be replaced by a direct apprehension (νοερὰ κατάληψις), which is a motionless movement of the mind towards God.⁸⁸

When we turn to Palamas' exchange of letters with Barlaam at the beginning of the hesychast controversy, we are confronted with the interesting fact that of the two Barlaam seems the closer to Metochites and Gregoras as regards gnosiology and the receptivity of the mind to divine inspiration. Since Meyendorff's (p.115) time, much important work has been done on Barlaam, chiefly by Robert Sinkewicz, Antonis Fyrigos, and Michele Trizio.⁸⁹ We are now in a position to situate Barlaam much more accurately in relation to the intellectual currents of the early fourteenth century than was Meyendorff, who saw Barlaam primarily as a humanistic nominalist.⁹⁰ In reality, Barlaam shared in the Neoplatonizing approach to Aristotle exemplified by Metochites and Gregoras. Trizio has shown that it was the Neoplatonist commentaries of Proclus on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Alcibiades* and of Syrianus on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* that provided Barlaam with his conceptual framework.⁹¹ It was through his study of these fifth-century non-Christian commentators that Barlaam came to formulate the views that so disturbed Palamas, namely, that apodictic syllogisms were invalid as a means of knowing God, because there can be no premises which are prior to God by nature,⁹² and that the pagan philosophers were illuminated by God just like the Church Fathers, because the truth to be found in both philosophy and theology is one.⁹³ These are views that seem also to have been held by Theodore Metochites, but if that was the case, he did not share them with his seventeen-year-old pupil, Gregory Palamas.

Palamas' own conceptual framework has been the subject of close study since Meyendorff. The British philosopher Stephen Clark finds in the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* 'evidence of an acute philosophical intelligence'. In his judgement, 'Meyendorff is almost certainly mistaken in supposing that Palamas had not read much pagan Platonic philosophy.'⁹⁴ Other scholars have (p.116) focused particularly on Palamas' Platonizing reading of Aristotle. In his study of the reception of Aristotle in the Latin and Greek traditions David Bradshaw finds that Palamas, developing the concept of *energeiai* in the light of Maximus the Confessor's divine *logoi*, rightly thinks of the *energeiai* 'as not merely divine operations, but in some sense God Himself'.⁹⁵ Christoph Erismann has shown recently how in chapters 132–6 of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, Palamas reflects on God in the light of the ten Aristotelian categories applicable to the sensible world and comes up with some original theses.⁹⁶ His predecessors either reject outright that the categories can be predicated of God, or else accept the category of substance (οὐσία) alone, or substance together with relation (πρὸς τι). Palamas admits a third category, that of action (ποιεῖν), which, like the first two, does not result in any composition or change in God.⁹⁷ The category

of action is rethought by Palamas in terms of *energeia*: ‘Those who assert that God is substance alone with nothing observed in him are representing God as having neither creation and operation nor relation (οὐδὲ τὸ ποιεῖν καὶ ἐνεργεῖν ἢ οὐδὲ τὸ πρὸς τι ἔχειν ἢ).’⁹⁸ Moreover, in being applied to God, these categories lose their accidental dimension and ‘are rethought in the mode of eminence’.⁹⁹ Palamas does not simply repeat Aristotle but links *energeia* with *poiein* and grafts it on to Aristotle’s theory of substance. In Erismann’s view, ‘far from contradicting Aristotle or showing an inadequate interpretation of his doctrine, Palamas demonstrates a good understanding of the text and, more importantly, provides a synthesis between the requirements of Christian metaphysics and the fundamentals of Aristotelian doctrine.’¹⁰⁰

The *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* have also been studied from a philosophical point of view by the Norwegian scholar, Torstein Tollefsen.¹⁰¹ The essence–energies distinction is Palamas’ solution to the problem of how transcendent activity is accommodated to created otherness. If participation in God is possible it cannot be in his transcendent nature, for it is generally conceded, Palamas says, that the divine essence is imparticipable.¹⁰² Participation must therefore mean that God is active in his creation. It is this activity, or (p.117) *energeia*, in which created beings can share. Meyendorff had maintained that the participation of created human beings in the uncreated life of God made a *real* distinction between divine essence and divine energy unavoidable.¹⁰³ Tollefsen is not convinced of this:

the activity [energy] proper to a being is not something totally different from what it is essentially, and when Palamas says the activity is the essential movement of nature, this precisely demonstrates that point. So being God and executing the capacities of what it is to be God, even if different or distinct, is not separated into two different or distinct realms of being.¹⁰⁴

For this reason, Tollefsen (following Nadal rather than Meyendorff) finds it ‘unfortunate’ that in his *Third Letter to Akindynos* ‘Palamas used a phrase that disturbed his addressee, speaking of the activity [energy] as a “lower divinity” (θεότης ὑφειμένη).’¹⁰⁵ This was an expression that prompted Akindynos to join Barlaam in accusing Palamas of ditheism. In response, Palamas accused the Akindynists of Eunomianism, for like the Eunomians they held that anything said of God is substance.¹⁰⁶ In the Eunomians’ case, this resulted in the degrading of the Son to the status of a creature because begottenness could not belong to the divine substance alongside unbegottenness. The Akindynists did not of course profess to regard the Son as a creature, but in Palamas’ view that was what was logically entailed by their claiming, out of a mistaken desire to avoid two Godheads, that the energy participated by creatures is created:

For they do not understand that just as God the Father is called Father in relation to his own Son and being Father belongs to him as an uncreated reality even though ‘Father’ does not denote the substance, so too God possesses also the energy as an uncreated reality even though the energy is distinct from the substance. And when we speak of one Godhead we speak of everything that God is, namely, both the substance and the energy.¹⁰⁷

(p.118) Tollefsen finds this argument a convincing attempt to balance unity and distinction in God, but he remains uncomfortable with language of higher and lower divinities, even if Palamas will only allow the expression ‘lower divinity’ to indicate the gift of deification, which is the participation by the creature in uncreated grace.¹⁰⁸

The precise nature of the essence–energies distinction is the subject of a richly documented article by John Demetracopoulos arguing that Palamas maintained a *distinctio realis* between

God's essence and his energies which was abandoned by his successors in favour of a distinction that was merely conceptual (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν), or, in the language of fourteenth-century scholasticism, that reflected a *distinctio rationis cum fundamento in re*.¹⁰⁹ Following in the tradition of Jugie, von Ivanka, and Podskalsky, Demetracopoulos argues for a 'mitigated Palamism' in Palamas' followers compared with Palamas himself. He provides ample evidence to prove that the language relating to essence and energies did indeed change. The expression κατ' ἐπίνοιαν, which was avoided by Palamas, came to be used frequently by Philotheos Kokkinos and later Palamites. Demetracopoulos concludes from this that the Palamites wanted to soften the harsh distinction between the essence and the energies made by Palamas himself. They were helped to do so, Demetracopoulos believes, by Kydones' rendering of Aquinas' *intentio* and *ratio* in certain contexts as ἐπίνοια, which 'played an important role for some Palamites to re-state their Palamism with smoother, more acceptable, Thomistic colours'.¹¹⁰ In Demetracopoulos's view, Palamas' *distinctio realis* is incompatible with divine simplicity. Moreover, his supposed distinction between a 'higher essence of God' and a 'lower divinity' seems to him 'redolent of Proclus' metaphysical tenet that each level of the hierarchical structure of beings derives its ontological grade from its essence, whereas it produces the lower level by granting, in terms of its superior, existence, substance, qualities, and energy to its inferior'.¹¹¹ The influence of Aquinas as 'a theological trans-confessional authority, or at least, semi-authority deserving to be seriously and profitably taken into account in all matters' was wholly to the good.¹¹²

Despite the impressive array of texts that Demetracopoulos examines, often with illuminating insight, there are two conclusions he draws which I would wish to challenge. The first is that Palamas has no qualms about distinguishing between two different *ontological* levels in the Godhead, a superior one (the essence) and an inferior one (the energies). The second is that Palamas' avoidance of κατ' ἐπίνοιαν indicates a strong objection to treating the distinction between the essence and the energies as conceptual.

(p.119) On the first point, Demetracopoulos admits that Palamas states in his *Second Refutation of Akindynos* that 'it is impossible to conceive of any severance or division in any way between the essence and the energy of God', but sets against this Palamas' supposed distinction between the 'superior essence of God' and 'the inferior divinity'.¹¹³ Without mentioning that Palamas himself denied that he had ever made such a distinction, he tacitly accepts Nadal's reconstruction of an original version of Palamas' *Third Letter to Akindynos* (in which the offending phrase is not a quotation from Barlaam but Palamas' own) as an established fact.¹¹⁴ Nor does he explain that on the single occasion when Palamas *does* accept the phrase 'lower divinity' (or 'deity', as Demetracopoulos renders it), he is referring to the gift of theosis.¹¹⁵

The *Third Letter to Akindynos* belongs to early 1341. Five years later, in a letter explaining his position to the empress Anna Palaiologina, Palamas discusses the phrase once again, emphatically repudiating it.¹¹⁶ The Fathers, he says, refer both to the essence of God and to the light of Mount Tabor seen by the disciples at the Transfiguration as divinity or deity (θεότης). We therefore regard the light of Tabor as uncreated, which leads Akindynos, like Barlaam, to accuse us falsely of advocating 'two uncreated divinities, one superior and the other inferior'.¹¹⁷ The reason for this, Palamas goes on to say, is that Akindynos regards the divine light of Tabor as created:

Because he calls that divine radiance created, he also necessarily calls it inferior; therefore it is he himself who says that there are two divinities, a superior and an inferior. Consequently, it is evident that it is in order to deceive his auditors that he accuses us of a higher and a

lower divinity. This is the true reason why he accuses us, namely, because we maintain that that divine and ineffable light (which he says is created) is uncreated, just as the God-bearing Fathers and Christ himself, who radiated this light and called it the kingdom of God, taught us.¹¹⁸

It is unreasonable (*pace* Nadal) to suppose that in 1341, Palamas changed his opinion in the face of criticism and then concealed the fact. It is much more likely that from the start Akindynos attributed to his opponent an explicit statement of what he was convinced was entailed by his premises—not an unusual rhetorical ploy.

With regard to the second point, there are, I suggest, reasons why Palamas was wary of the qualifier κατ' ἐπίνοιαν without thereby implying that he was (p.120) altogether ruling out a conceptual distinction between the essence and the energies. As evidence of a sharp distinction in Palamas between essence and energies, Demetracopoulos quotes a passage from *Apologia* 19 which, he says, makes it obvious that 'Palamas regarded the division between God's essence and energies as radically different and thus greater than [...] that between the persons of the Holy Trinity'.¹¹⁹ In this passage Palamas cites John 14:28 ('the Father is greater than I') and makes the point that if the Father is greater than the Son (by virtue of causality), despite the fact that the Son is self-subsistent and consubstantial with the Father, then *a fortiori* (πολλῷ μᾶλλον) the essence must be above the energies (ὑπερέξει τῶν ἐνεργειῶν). Palamas is here drawing an analogy between the unity-in-distinction of the Father and the Son, and the unity-in-distinction of the essence and the energies. He is not emphasizing a radical difference between the two unities -in-distinction. It is true, however, that Palamas does not use the term κατ' ἐπίνοιαν to characterize the distinction between essence and energy. I suspect that this was because of the signification 'human fiction' that Eunomius had given to κατ' ἐπίνοιαν in his Christological dispute with Basil of Caesarea.¹²⁰ The Eunomian dispute was of great interest to the Palamites because of Basil's use of the term ἐνέργεια in his *Adversus Eunomium*. Philotheos Kokkinos, in particular, is thought on secure grounds to have made an independent study not only of Basil's treatise but also of Eunomius' *Liber Apologeticus*, the work to which Basil was responding.¹²¹ It is perhaps not a coincidence that Philotheos, like Palamas, avoided using κατ' ἐπίνοιαν—in Philotheos' case until he found it used in an acceptable fashion by Demetrios Kydones in his translation of Aquinas *Summa contra Gentiles* (completed in December 1354).¹²²

Interpreting Palamas' Theological Perspective

Since Meyendorff's time, work on Palamas' theological (as opposed to philosophical) perspective has been done principally by Orthodox scholars, largely on the basis of the new accessibility to the texts offered by the Christou (p.121) edition. The doyen of these scholars is Georgios Mantzaridis (b. 1935), a student of Christou who became Professor of Moral Theology and Christian Sociology at the University of Thessaloniki. In 1963, Mantzaridis published a study on deification in Gregory Palamas, which was included in his influential collection of essays, *Palamika*, and translated into English in 1984.¹²³ Throughout his career Mantzaridis has emphasized the experiential dimension of Christian theology, a dimension underpinned by the ecstatic character of the knowledge of God. The real value of Palamite research, in his view, is that familiarity with the teaching of Gregory Palamas can help us attain the goal of human existence, which is to go beyond what we are by nature and become gods by grace. As the culmination of the hesychast tradition on this subject, Palamas' teaching on deification is of enduring importance in the practice of the Christian life.

The practical application of Palamas' teaching is also a major concern of the Serbian scholar, Amphilochios Radović, since 1990 metropolitan of Montenegro and the Littoral, whose book on the Trinitarian theology of St Gregory Palamas, the fruit of a dissertation defended at the University of Athens in 1973, has become a major point of reference for Orthodox studies on the Trinity.¹²⁴ The metropolitan takes a different approach from Meyendorff. He is not especially concerned with answering Western objections to 'Palamism', although he does not ignore them.¹²⁵ The book, divided into three parts, proceeds from the epistemology of our knowledge of God to the trihypostatic character of the Godhead and culminates with the unions and distinctions within the Holy Trinity. Meyendorff is occasionally cited, but Radović does not follow up his arguments.¹²⁶ It is Lossky who seems to have exerted the greater influence on him, particularly through his discussions of the *Filioque*. Claiming that Palamas regarded the *Filioque* as not just one of the theological differences dividing East and West but as indicative of two different Trinitarian theologies that are (p.122) incompatible with each other, Radović strongly endorses this viewpoint.¹²⁷ In view of the papal authorization of the addition of the word *Filioque* to the Creed in the eleventh century, Palamas' position, Radović insists, follows the 'communal' search for knowledge as witnessed by the Fathers and the symbols of the faith, whereas the Latin teaching is the product of an 'individualistic' intellectualism. On the doctrinal substance of the *Filioque*, the Western teaching 'identifies the Trinity's mode of existence with the modality of its mission and manifestation, that is to say, it identifies Theology with the Economy'.¹²⁸ By contrast, in the Eastern tradition, which Palamas follows, the eternal existence of the Spirit is from the Father alone, with the Spirit's manifestation being accomplished in the created world by (*dia*) and from (*ek*) the Son. Radović acknowledges that the teaching of Gregory of Cyprus (1241–1289) on the 'eternal manifestation' of the Spirit by the Son is 'in the same line of thought' as that of Palamas, by virtue of Palamas' use of Augustine's image of the Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and the Son, but points out that Palamas does not actually speak of such an 'eternal manifestation'.¹²⁹ The apophatic character of Palamas' thinking prevents him from developing a rationally structured and determined theology of God in himself. What he does develop is a theory of the manifestation of the persons of the Trinity on the level of energy.

Radović's discussion of the distinction between the essence and the energies comes at the climax of his book.¹³⁰ It is the most lucid exposition of Palamas' thinking on this topic to date in a modern language. Although Radović claims at the outset that Palamas' mode of thinking is 'antinomic',¹³¹ there is no easy recourse to 'antinomies' to solve difficulties without further discussion. Palamas' teaching on the essence and the energies is presented as a wholly rational exercise in biblical hermeneutics, even if it requires the reconciliation of antithetical statements. The New Testament tells us that no one has seen God (John 1:18 and 1 John 4:11) and yet the pure in heart will see God (Matthew 5:8) and indeed will see him face to face (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12). Palamas' opponents interpreted this vision in purely eschatological terms. But for Palamas, the fundamental question was how is God at the same time both visible and invisible, both participable and imparticipable.¹³² The incomprehensible and transcendent nature of God is not simply a consequence of the feebleness of our intellect. It is a divine property. In Radović's judgement,

(p.123)

The acceptance of that which is in reality, and not just by analogy, both comprehensible and incomprehensible, both participable and imparticipable, both known and unknown, in one and the same divinity leads necessarily to the conclusion that a distinction exists within the divinity. This distinction is precisely the one between the essence and the energy in the

Trinity. The fact of the revelation and of the historical and real presence of God witnesses of itself to the following truth: God exists as imparticipable in his participation, and as absolutely incomprehensible in his total presence. The two contradictory affirmations are absolutely true without one abolishing the other. If we abolish the participable and comprehensible character of God, we automatically abolish his existence (at least for created beings) and his Revelation. If, on the other hand, we do not admit the imparticipable and absolutely inaccessible character of God, we deny the Bible and end up in an absurdity: created beings participate in the essence of God, a participation by which the tri-hypostatic God turns out to be a multitude of hypostases.¹³³

This, Radović insists, is entirely consonant with the earlier patristic tradition. The sole difference in Palamas is that he has developed a vocabulary to clarify the distinction, which is not ‘the invention of an ontological definition and a logical comprehension of the ineffable relation between God and the world, but the defence of the experience of the Church and of the truth of Revelation.’¹³⁴

One important question that Radović addresses is the relationship between the essence–energies distinction and the personal distinctions in the Trinity. In Palamas there is no impersonal doctrine of the energies. For the energies are the ‘indicators’ not simply of the essence but of its tri-hypostatic character: ‘the energy presupposes and manifests the person.’¹³⁵ If the essence did not have an energy distinct from itself, which is uniquely neither ‘accident’, nor hypostasis, nor temporal event, it would remain an abstract concept, deprived of concrete reality. Yet the distinction does not endow the energy with a hypostatic reality of its own. It is, rather, a distinction between ‘that which is by nature’ and ‘that which is the product of the will’. According to Palamas, the energy, although distinct from the essence, always accompanies it, and thus, far from resulting in ditheism, actually manifests the unity of the Godhead:

The energy is a *union* of three hypostases in the same way as the essence is, and it is contemplated ‘equally’ in each hypostasis as being that which they have in common. This does not mean, however, that the energies characterize the hypostases, as if constituting their hypostatic properties. Whereas the hypostatic properties characterize each hypostasis separately, the energies characterize only the nature, being common to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In consequence the divinity of the three persons is effectively one and it is contemplated as such.¹³⁶

(p.124) Far from leading to polytheism, the energies thus confirm the unity of the three persons in one Godhead.

Two decades were to pass before the next important contribution to Palamite studies, Jacques Lison’s *L’Esprit répandu*, the product of a doctoral thesis supervised by André de Halleux.¹³⁷ Lison, a Belgian-born Canadian Dominican, does much to counteract the negative Dominican approach characteristic of the 1974 Palamas issue of *Istina*. Twenty years on from the *Istina* articles, however, it is still necessary to reassure Catholics that Palamas is not a heretic: Lison’s Dominican colleague, Jean-Marie Tillard, reminds readers in his Preface to the book that neither the constitution *Benedictus Deus* of Pope Benedict XII (1336) nor the Decree *Laetentur Coeli* of the Council of Florence (1439) formally condemned the Orthodox doctrine of the divine energies, but he admits that ‘the Catholic tradition does not know how to “receive” it’.¹³⁸ The task Lison sets himself is precisely to facilitate the Catholic reception of Palamas. He wants to go beyond the polemics and bring out the richness of Palamas’ teaching based on a close study of the texts. His focus is on pneumatology, which Palamas never treats systematically but which, as he says, pervades all his writings. Despite Palamas’

opposition to the *Filioque*, Lison is convinced that an understanding of his teaching on the Spirit will situate him for Western readers within the broader soteriological, ascetical, and mystical traditions of the Church:

It is mainly for this reason that we do not hesitate to recognize in Palamism the expression of the same faith as that of the West. There is of course a different theological vision, in accordance with another tradition; but does not this difference contribute to our catholicity? For what tradition can claim to exhaust the fullness of Christ?¹³⁹

This is the same approach as that of de Halleux. Lison admits that ‘pneumatology separates the East and the West, whereas it should be that which unites them’,¹⁴⁰ but expresses the hope that a knowledge of Gregory Palamas will help to overcome this.

Lison covers much the same ground as Radović, but refers only to an article in French by him on the *Filioque*.¹⁴¹ He appears not to know Radović’s *Mystère de la Sainte Trinité selon saint Grégoire Palamas*, which at that time was available only in Greek, but the French article will have left him in no doubt about Radović’s view of the centrality of arguments against the *Filioque* in Palamas’ teaching.¹⁴² In keeping with his conviction about the compatibility of Palamas (p.125) with the Latin tradition, however, Lison is anxious to play down the idea that Palamas was absolutely intransigent on the matter of the *Filioque*. He makes the most of the psychological image of the Trinity, characteristic of Augustine, which is found more than once in Palamas’ writings, but in deference to the doubts expressed by Sinkewicz in his edition of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, does not claim that this proves a direct reading by Palamas of Augustine.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the use of this psychological image demonstrates, Lison believes, an openness (*ouverture*) in Palamas that needs to be set alongside his admitted intransigence.¹⁴⁴

Lison makes a useful point when he claims that the appearance of intransigence in Palamas is exaggerated by his method of argument. Palamas adopts two parallel strategies, both of which rely on syllogistic logic.¹⁴⁵ The first is *reductio ad absurdum*—proving that the premises accepted by the opponent lead inexorably to absurd conclusions. The second is a form of *elenchus heresis*, that is, the refutation of heresy, in this case proving that the opponent’s premises lead to a reprise of one or other of the heresies of the Early Church. It was not only Palamas, of course, who used these strategies. Some of his opponents did too (though not Gregoras, who rated syllogistic reasoning as fit only for second-rate minds). The reliance of Palamas on these polemical strategies was uncondusive to a common search for truth and led only to an interminable series of refutations and counter-refutations.

On the positive content of Palamas’ teaching, Lison focuses his analysis on a discussion of participation as the key to understanding how the believer attains deification in Christ through the Holy Spirit. He is persuaded by Palamas that participation is not in the divine essence, which would lead to the multiplication of hypostases in God, but in the energies. Like Radović, he emphasizes that each hypostasis of the Holy Trinity possesses all the energies. It is thus that through baptism Christians are united not solely with the Son but also with the Father and the Spirit. He is not as clear as Radović on the relationship between energy and hypostasis in the Trinity, but his exposition of the hesychast’s ascent to the vision of God in the Holy Spirit is well rooted in the texts. When he comes at the end of the book to ask himself what he has contributed that has not already been said by Meyendorff and Mantzaridis, it is, he rightly points out, to bring together systematically what Palamas has said about the Spirit in various passages scattered throughout his writings.¹⁴⁶ As a result, our understanding of Palamas’ teaching on divine–human communion has been considerably deepened.

(p.126) The most important monograph on Palamas since Lison—I would say since Meyendorff—is Stavros Yangazoglou’s work of 2001, *Communion of Theosis*, the fruit of research carried out under the supervision of John Zizioulas.¹⁴⁷ In a review of Lison’s book, Yangazoglou reproaches the Dominican for relying too much on Lossky’s division between the ‘economy’ of the Son and the ‘economy’ of the Spirit.¹⁴⁸ Although Lison ‘manages to steer away from the dangerous reefs of a Losskian pneumatomonism’, says Yangazoglou, he does not deal satisfactorily with ‘the crucial issue of a full and organic *synthesis* of christology and pneumatology together with all the consequences which such a synthesis entails for all levels of theology in accordance with Palamas’ teachings’.¹⁴⁹ Other unsatisfactory aspects mentioned by Yangazoglou are Lison’s shying away from Palamas’ pronounced hostility to the *Filioque* and his scanty treatment of the ‘horizontal’, or ecclesial, dimension of pneumatology, both of which are issues that Yangazoglou addresses squarely in his own book.

At the beginning of *Communion of Theosis* Yangazoglou declares that two basic axes have determined his research on the teaching of St Gregory Palamas. One is the polemic of many Western scholars against the ‘essentialism’ and ‘impersonal energies’ that they attribute to Palamas on the basis of a supposed Neoplatonizing metaphysics; the other is the difficulty modern Orthodox scholars often have (especially if they hold a Losskian view of the *Filioque*) in relating Palamas’ christology to his pneumatology. A vital hermeneutic problem along the way also concerns the relationship between Dionysius the Areopagite and Gregory Palamas. Meyendorff, Yangazoglou points out, is not very helpful on this relationship because he is not free from a Western reading of Dionysius that regards him simply as a channel of Neoplatonic thought. The purpose of Yangazoglou’s book is thus to demonstrate the coherence of the essence–energies distinction with the triadological, christological and pneumatological teaching of St Gregory Palamas and the Greek patristic tradition as a whole in view not only of the Western criticism that there is no christological basis to Palamas’ triadology, but also of the Eastern tendency to drive a wedge between the Son and the Spirit.

One of the valuable results of Yangazoglou’s research is to demonstrate how a rejection of the *Filioque* does not lead in Palamas to a Losskian separation of the economies of the Son and the Spirit.¹⁵⁰ Palamas is convinced that the *Filioque* (p.127) confuses theology with economy, so that the hypostatic character of the Spirit is impaired not only in the theology of the Trinity but also in the economic work of Christ. The ‘theogonic’ property of the Father (τὸ θεόγονον) is not shared by the Son, otherwise there would be two Godheads instead of one. The Latin argument that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son ‘as from one principle’ (*tamquam ab uno principio*) appears to Palamas a mere sophism. The Latins are presuming to analyse internal relations within the essence of the Godhead while ignoring the authentic hypostatic relations that have been revealed to us. Because the hypostatic characteristics of the persons are different, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father is different from the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son. If the two processions were the same, there would be two divinities rather than one.

The Augustinian image of the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and the Son does not alter the way the hypostases are structured in terms of origin. Palamas is aware of this image through Maximos Planoudes’ translation of the *De Trinitate*, and finds it useful for suggesting how the Spirit belongs also to the Son, who possesses him from the Father (cf. John 15:26), but insists that he ‘proceeds from him [the Father] alone in his coming to be’.¹⁵¹ The divine energies belong to the essence but are instantiated in the hypostases. ‘The

enhypostatic character of the divine energies,’ as Yangazoglou puts it, ‘proves to be the key to understanding the way in which the Holy Spirit can be called “love” and “pre-eternal joy”. The richness of the Godhead with regard to energy as loving perichoresis is common to the three persons and exists in them. Love as energy is common to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.’¹⁵²

According to Palamas, the Christological kerygma is closely connected with the good pleasure (εὐδοκία) of the Father and is accomplished by the dynamic co-operation (συνεργασία) of the Holy Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit fills the teaching of Jesus, making operative the words ‘uttered in a bodily manner’.¹⁵³ Certainly, at the end of the earthly ministry of Christ a new period is inaugurated by the work of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost was a hypostatic manifestation of the Holy Spirit, but Palamas is clear that ‘the fact of Pentecost does not have a character that is autonomous and independent of the Christological mystery itself’.¹⁵⁴ All three hypostases participate in the divine economy and are manifested by it.¹⁵⁵ There are not two consecutive economies.

The complete synthesis of the two economies in Palamas is reflected in his teaching on deification. Commenting on the emphasis in modern scholarship (p.128) on the essence–energies distinction, Yangazoglou objects to the way Palamas is usually presented as a dogmatic theologian uninterested in the sacramental life in contrast, say, to Nicholas Kabasilas, who is held to be radically different from him. Palamas is often thought to project a ‘therapeutic’ ecclesiology emphasizing an ascent to union with God through contemplation and ascetic discipline in a manner unrelated to the sacramental life.¹⁵⁶ Certainly, Palamas valued contemplation (θεοπτία) above theology (θεολογία). The experience of God transcends our capacity to speak about him. Nor can we attain participation in God and the vision of the uncreated light through intellectual effort alone. In an important passage on how we can come to share in the life of God, Palamas quotes a famous saying of Dionysius the Areopagite: ‘Deification is the attaining of likeness and union with God.’¹⁵⁷ How do we do this? The starting-point is not, as one might expect, application to the philosophical (i.e. ascetic) life; it is the rebirth of baptism.¹⁵⁸ The fullness of the adoption of baptism is experienced as an eschatological reality. On the way to that fullness, the believer participates in the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ through ‘the mystical bread and cup’, which conforms the believer not to Christ’s divine nature but to his transfigured humanity. The ‘communion of theosis’ that Palamas teaches is the product of a complete integration of the ascetical with the sacramental life, with the former dependent on the latter.

A More Nuanced Palamas

New work since Meyendorff in the fields of history, philosophy, and theology, based on the detailed analysis of the texts, including those that have more recently become available, has brought Palamas into sharper focus. We are now in a better position to appreciate the context in which Palamas conducted his debates: the complexity of the political situation both in Constantinople and on Mount Athos; the nature of the intellectual challenges facing him on the one side from the Neoplatonist philosophers Barlaam and Gregoras, and on the other from the conservative monk Akindynos; the character of the refinements that he brought from his study of the Cappadocians, Dionysius, and Maximus to the philosophical notions of participation and *energeia* and to the theological implications of divine–human communion. We are also better informed about such matters as the operation of social networks and the techniques of rhetorical performance that governed the way in which arguments were

presented. (p.129) Palamas was creative in his thinking but also fully immersed in the social, political, and intellectual currents of his time.

The Palamas that emerges from these studies is a complex figure who does not fit the straightforward dichotomies set out by Meyendorff in his seminal work of 1959. Nor, as Kiprian Kern pointed out, is he ‘the end point of the development of theological thought’.¹⁵⁹ The fact that his disciples were able after his death to draw on newly translated texts of Thomas Aquinas to refine his arguments further in the face of new objections demonstrates the fruitfulness of his thinking. This thinking is not only of interest to students of historical theology but has also begun to feature in current debates. It is now time, as Robert Sinkewicz has said, ‘to begin raising some of the larger questions posed by this episode of Byzantine religious history’.¹⁶⁰ (p.130)

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ P. Christou (ed.), Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα ἰ. vol 1: Λόγοι ἀποδεικτικοί, Ἀντεπιγραφαί, Ἐπιστολαὶ πρὸς Βαρλαάμ καὶ Ἀκίνδυνον ἰ. Ὑπὲρ Ἠσυχαστῶν, edited by B. Bobrinsky, P. Papaevangelou, J. Meyendorff and P. Christou (Thessaloniki, 1962). On this edition, see Stiernon, ‘Bulletin’, 233–5.

⁽²⁾ J. Darrouzès, *REB* 23 (1965), 264–5.

⁽³⁾ M. Candal, ‘Obras completas de Gregorio Pálamas (volumen primero)’, *OCP* 31 (1965), 415–19.

⁽⁴⁾ Christou was appointed minister of education towards the end of the period of Greek military rule (1967–1974). With the fall of the dictatorship, he was dismissed from his university post, with the consequent disruption of his publishing programme.

⁽⁵⁾ Robert E. Sinkewicz, C.S.B. (ed.), *Saint Gregory Palamas. The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters. A Critical Edition, Translation and Study. Studies and Texts 83* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988).

⁽⁶⁾ Sinkewicz, *150 Chapters*, x.

⁽⁷⁾ Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν, 964–1009. This is the text reproduced by Migne, PG 150, 1117–226.

⁽⁸⁾ The Greek editors appear sometimes to have preferred the readings of Sinkewicz’s beta family of manuscripts, whereas Sinkewicz consistently follows the alpha family. On no occasion, so far as I have been able to ascertain, does this affect the sense.

⁽⁹⁾ Ettore Perrella (b.1952) graduated from the University of Padua in 1974 with a thesis on Giordano Bruno. He then studied with Jacques Lacan in Paris, after which he ran a series of seminars on the lines of Lacan’s own *Séminaires* in Padua, his native city. Later he broke with the Lacanians and founded the Accademia platonica delle arti. Recently he has published a three-volume poem modelled on Dante’s *Divine Comedy* in which he recounts a journey to Paradise, where he discovers that the West cannot save itself by its own liberal tradition from the dehumanizing forces of globalization (*Viaggio in Paradiso: Poema fantastico per il XXI secolo*, vol. 1, *La città*, vol. 2, *La vita*, vol. 3, *I principi* [Rome: NeP edizioni, 2016]).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Perrella I, xiii–xiv.

⁽¹¹⁾ The bulk of these texts consisted of Meyendorff's French translation of the *Triads* printed *en face* with his critical edition (Jean Meyendorff (ed.), *Grégoire Palamas, Défense des saints hésychastes*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1959).

⁽¹²⁾ Perrella I, xiv–xv.

⁽¹³⁾ Perrella was not sure at first whether Bompiani would undertake to publish more than one volume. But *Atto e luce* was a publishing success, and was followed by Perrella II (2005), and Perrella III (2006). The Greek text of all of Palamas' writings is reproduced except for the homilies, of which only an Italian translation is given. Also in Italian only (at the end of the first volume) is the *Encomium* of the Patriarch Philotheos, which in the Greek is published not in the Christou volumes but among the works of Philotheos Kokkinos edited by D. Tsames. This is the only edition to date of the whole of Palamas in a Western language.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The most useful works are still volumes 3 and 4 of the *Actes de Lavra* (P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, and D. Papachryssanthou [eds], *Actes de Lavra*, III [Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1979], and P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, D. Papachryssanthou, and S. Ćirković [eds], *Actes de Lavra*, IV [Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1982]) and the first volume of Darrouzès' edition of the patriarchal register of Constantinople (J. Darrouzès, *Les registres des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, 1/5 [Paris: Institut français d'Études Byzantines, 1977]).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Antonio Rigo, *Monaci esicasti e Monaci Bogomili* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1989).

⁽¹⁶⁾ Rigo, *Monaci esicasti*, 233.

⁽¹⁷⁾ My account is based on Rigo, *Monaci esicasti*, 156–78. Cf. Meyendorff's treatment of the affair (*Introduction*, 55–8 [*Study*, 35–7]), which agrees that hesychast and Bogomil circles were in contact with each other but is more defensive about the role of Palamas.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Unspecified in the sources, which simply mention Βυζάντια κακά (Rigo, *Monaci esicasti*, 158).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Rigo quotes the Acts of Docheiariou (Doch. 30, rr. 4–5), which state specifically that the absence of the *protos* was the occasion of 'many deeds contrary to the ancient rules' (*Monaci esicasti*, 164).

⁽²⁰⁾ Antonio Rigo, 'L'assemblea generale athonita del 1344 su un gruppo di monaci bogomili', *Cristianesimo nella storia* 5 (1984), 475–506; Rigo *Monaci esicasti*, 167–86.

⁽²¹⁾ On this document, the *Hagioretikon Gramma*, which is preserved in Vat. gr. 604, see Rigo, 'Assemblea' and Rigo, *Monaci esicasti*. 178–86.

⁽²²⁾ Rigo does warn, however, that we do not have any testimony as to the real existence of 'superhesychasts' of this type (*Monaci esicasti*, 256).

⁽²³⁾ Rigo finds a close parallel in the teaching of Theodore Blachernites, who was condemned in the eleventh century for holding that the spiritual Christian, after passing successively through the various angelic orders, is transformed ultimately into the divine nature itself (*Monaci esicasti*, 218). Such ideas go back still further to the 'Isochrists' of the sixth century.

⁽²⁴⁾ Rigo, *Monaci esicasti*, 220.

⁽²⁵⁾ See further, Norman Russell, 'The Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos and His Defence of Hesychasm', in Eugenia Russell (ed.), *Spirituality in Late Byzantium* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 21–31.

⁽²⁶⁾ Angela Constantinides Hero, *Letters of Gregory Akindynos*. Greek text and English translation (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1983), Letter 52, 223–5.

⁽²⁷⁾ Nikephoros Gregoras, *Antirrhethika* I, 1–4 (ed. Beyer, 131–3).

⁽²⁸⁾ Juan Nadal Cañellas, *La résistance d'Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas. Enquête historique, avec traduction et commentaire de quatre traités édités récemment*. Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et Documents 51 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), vol. 2, Commentaire historique.

⁽²⁹⁾ See above, p. 90.

⁽³⁰⁾ Nadal, *La résistance d'Akindynos*, vol. 2, 73. This contempt, he believes, also affected Meyendorff's student, Angela Constantinides Hero.

⁽³¹⁾ Nadal, *La résistance d'Akindynos*, vol. 2, 276–7.

⁽³²⁾ Meyendorff (following Jugie) dates the second synod to August 1341 (*Introduction*, 86–8). Loenertz, however, has proved that the synod was actually held in July (Raymond-J. Loenertz, 'La chronique brève de 1352', *OCP* 30 [1964], 61).

⁽³³⁾ Nadal, *La résistance d'Akindynos*, vol. 2, 178.

⁽³⁴⁾ Antonio Rigo, 'Il Monte Athos e la controversia palamitica dal concilio del 1351 al *tomo sinodale* del 1368', in Antonio Rigo (ed.), *Gregorio Palamas e oltre*, 1–177. Rigo's study is the introduction to his critical edition of the Synodal Tome of 1368. On the theological aspects, see also Norman Russell, 'Prochoros Cydones and the fourteenth-century understanding of Orthodoxy'. My own paper, although published later than Rigo's study, had been sent to the publisher four years previously and therefore could not take into account Rigo's careful analysis of the historical context.

⁽³⁵⁾ Rigo, 'Il Monte Athos', 11–14.

⁽³⁶⁾ Rigo, 'Il Monte Athos', 16–18. The Phakrases affair (contemporary with that of Prochoros) was not resolved until 1369.

⁽³⁷⁾ Demetrios Kydones, *Invective against the patriarch Philotheos* (Giovanni Mercati, *Notizie*, 320. 45).

⁽³⁸⁾ Rigo, 'Il monte Athos', 14–15.

⁽³⁹⁾ R.-J. Loenertz, *Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance*. Studi e Testi 186 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1956), vol.1, no. 96, 130–2.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Rigo, 'Il monte Athos', 49.

⁽⁴¹⁾ This militates against the common claim, going back to Jugie ('Palamite [controverse]', *DTC* 11 [1932], 1793–4), that it was the Palamite 'capture' of the patriarchate that imposed Palamism on the Byzantine Church.

⁽⁴²⁾ Rigo, 'Il monte Athos', 49–50.

⁽⁴³⁾ Rigo, 'Il monte Athos', 50.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Rigo, ‘Il monte Athos’, 50.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Some progress has been made since Rigo’s remark. The opusculum on apophatic and cataphatic theology (Περὶ καταφατικοῦ καὶ ἀποφατικοῦ τρόπου ἐπὶ τῆς θεολογίας) has recently been edited from its unique manuscript (Vat. gr. 678, fols 31–103) by Polemis in Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), *Auctores varii. Theologica varia inedita saeculi XIV: Gregorius Pelagonius, Adversus Palamam; Anonymus, Adversus Cantacuzenum; Prochorus Cydones, De Lumine Thaborico*, CCSG 76 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012). Of Prochoros’ *De essentia et operatione* only Book VI has benefited from a critical edition: M. Candal, ‘El libro VI de Prócoro Cidonio (sobre la luz tabórica)’, *OCP* 20 (1954), 247–96. Books I and II (attributed by Migne to Gregory Akindynos) are printed in PG 151, 1191–1242. Of Prochoros’ translations from Thomas Aquinas and other Latin authors, his translations of eight letters of St Augustine and a short philosophical text of Boethius have been edited: Herbert Hunger (ed.), *Prochoros Kydones, Übersetzung von acht Briefen des Hl. Augustinus*. Wiener Studien 9 (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984); Dimitrios Z. Nikitas (ed.), Boethius, *De topicis differentiis καὶ οἱ βυζαντινὲς μεταφράσεις τῶν Μανουὴλ Ὀλοβώλου καὶ Προχόρου Κυδώνη*. Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi 5 (Athens: Academy of Athens, 1990).

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Antonis Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*. Fyrigos’s work is intended as a replacement of Giuseppe Schirò (ed.), *Barlaam Calabro, Epistole greche* (Palermo: Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantino e Neogreci, 1954). His reordering of the letters has not met with universal acceptance, but he has used a fuller list of manuscripts than Schirò to establish the text and his introduction is important.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Angela Constantinides Hero, *Letters of Gregory Akindynos*. Hero has been criticised for not respecting the order of the letters in the manuscript tradition and for making significant errors in the translation.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Juan Nadal Cañellas (ed.), *Gregorii Acindyni refutationes duae operis Gregorii Palamae cui titulus Dialogus inter Orthodoxum et Barlaamitam*. CCSG 31 (Turnhout and Leuven: Brepols and Leuven University Press, 1995). Nadal has also published a French translation of the text with an extensive commentary: Nadal Cañellas, *La résistance d’Akindynos* (2006).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Hans-Veit Beyer (ed.), *Nikephoros Gregoras, Antirrhetika I. Einleitung, Textausgabe, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen*. Wiener Byzantinische Studien 12 (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), *Theodori Dexii Opera Omnia*. CCSG 55 (Turnhout and Leuven: Brepols and Leuven University Press, 2003); Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), *Auctores varii. Theologica varia inedita saeculi XIV*, CCSG 76 (Turnhout and Leuven: Brepols and Leuven University Press, 2012).

⁽⁵¹⁾ Dimitrios B. Kaimakis (ed.), *Φιλοθέου Κοκκίνου δογματικὰ ἔργα*. Thessalonian Byzantine Writers 3 (Thessaloniki: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1983); Dimitrios G. Tsames (ed.), *Φιλοθέου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Κοκκίνου ἀγιολογικὰ ἔργα*. Thessalonian Byzantine Writers 4 (Thessaloniki: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1985).

⁽⁵²⁾ Dimitrios G. Tsames (ed.), *Ἰωσήφ Καλοθέτου Συγγράμματα*. Thessalonian Byzantine Writers 1 (Thessaloniki: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1980).

⁽⁵³⁾ E. Voordeckers and F. Tinnefeld (eds), *Refutationes duae Prochori Cydonii et Disputatio cum Paulo Patriarcha Latino epistulis septem tradita*. CCSG 16 (Turnhout and Leuven: Brepols and Leuven University Press, 1987).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Charalambos G. Sotiropoulos (ed.), Θεοφάνους Γ' ἐπισκόπου Νικαίας, Περὶ θαβωρίου φωτός λόγοι πέντε, Τὸ πρῶτον νῦν ἐκδιδόμενοι, Εἰσαγωγή, κείμενον (Athens, 1990). Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), Θεοφάνους Νικαίας, Απόδειξις ὅτι ἐδύνατο ἐξ αἰδίου γεγενῆσθαι τὰ ὄντα καὶ ἀνατροπὴ ταύτης, Editio princeps, εἰσαγωγή, κείμενο, μετάφρασις, εὐρετήρια, Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi Philosophi Byzantini 10 (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2000). For a critique of Sotiropoulos's edition, see Ioannis D. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea: His Life and Works*. Wiener Byzantinische Studien 20 (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 208–14.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ For details, see Yannis Spiteris and Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello, 'Nicola Cabasilas Chamaetos', in Conticello and Conticello, *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition II*, 315–410.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Robert E. Sinkewicz, C.S.B., *Theoleptos of Philadelphia, The Monastic Discourses. A Critical Edition, Translation and Study* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Giovanni Mercati, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca, a Teodoro Meliteniota ed altri appunti per la storia della teologia e della letteratura bizantina del secolo XIV*. Studi e Testi 56 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1931).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Raymond-J. Loenertz, O.P., *Correspondance de Manuel Calecas*. Studi e Testi 152 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1950); Raymond-J. Loenertz, O.P., *Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance*, 2 vols. Studi e Testi 186, 208 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1956, 1960). Tinnefeld's German translation of Kydones' correspondence is also important: Franz Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydones, Briefe*. Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 12 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1981).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Demetrios completed his translation of Thomas's *Summa contra Gentiles* at the end of 1354, and himself describes it as an immediate publishing success (Demetrios Kydones, *Apologia I* [Mercati, *Notizie*, 363. 27–9]). Prochoros also translated a part of the *Summa theologiae* and other texts, but seems to have intended his translations more for his private use, although they did circulate more widely. For the broader context of their work, see Norman Russell, 'Palamism and the Circle of Demetrius Cydones', in Charalambos Dendrinos et al. (eds), *Porphyrogenita. Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 153–74; Judith Ryder, *The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones. A Study of Fourteenth-Century Byzantine Politics, Religion and Society* (Leiden and Boston: E. J. Brill, 2010); Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, Part II.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Theophanes, a protégé of Philotheos Kokkinos, was made metropolitan of Nicaea upon Philotheos' return to the patriarchate in 1364. He never visited his see (which was in the Ottoman emirate) but was employed by Philotheos in several diplomatic missions. He died shortly after 1376.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Ioannis D. Polemis, 'Ο μητροπολίτης Νικαίας Θεοφάνης καὶ τὸ «Περὶ Θαβωρίου φωτός» ἔργον αὐτοῦ», *EEBS* 47 (1987–9), 201–19.

⁽⁶²⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 87–109; cf. Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 89–95.

⁽⁶³⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 94–5.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 98–9.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 107.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 104.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 108. Thus Theophanes ‘arrived at results which were not acceptable to anybody’ (ibid., 102).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 261, n. 21; Meyendorff, ‘Le dogme eucharistique dans les controverses théologiques du XIV^e siècle’, *Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμᾶς* 42 (1959), 93–100, at 99–100 (reprinted in Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm*, study XIII).

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), Θεοφάνους Νικαίας ἱ. Απόδειξις ὅτι ἐδύνατο ἐξ αἰδίου γεγενῆσθαι τὰ ὄντα καὶ ἀνατροπὴ ταύτης ἱ. Editio princeps, εἰσαγωγή, κείμενο, μετάφραση, εὐρετήρια. *Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi Philosophi Byzantini* 10 (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2000), 26*–28*.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ See Polemis’s synopsis of the treatise, Θεοφάνους Ἀπόδειξις, 20*–25*.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Polemis, Θεοφάνους Ἀπόδειξις, 85*–86*.

⁽⁷²⁾ Polemis, Θεοφάνους Ἀπόδειξις, 87*.

⁽⁷³⁾ For a survey, see Linos G. Benakis, ‘Epilogue: Current Research in Byzantine Philosophy’, in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, 283–8; reprinted in Benakis, *Texts and Studies*, 647–52.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ B. N. Tatakis, *La philosophie byzantine* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1949). A Greek translation edited by Benakis, with a new preface by Tatakis, was published in 1977: B. N. Tatakis, *Ἡ βυζαντινὴ φιλοσοφία* ἱ (Athens: Society for the Study of Modern Greek Culture and General Education, 1977).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ He relies for his narrative on Papamichail, *Ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς ἱ* and Stăniloae, *Viața și învățătura*.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Tatakis, *Ἡ βυζαντινὴ φιλοσοφία*, 252, citing F. Uspenskij, ‘Le mouvement philosophique et théologique au XIV^e siècle’, *BZ* 1 (1892). For a recent estimation of Uspensky’s work, see Paul Ermilov, ‘Feodor Uspenskij and his Critics in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia’, in Rigo, Ermilov, and Trizio, *Byzantine Theology*, 187–96.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ See Linos G. Benakis, ‘Commentaries and Commentators on the Logical Works of Aristotle in Byzantium’, in R. Claussen and R. Daube-Schackat (eds), *Gedankenzeichen. Festschrift für Klaus Oehler zum 60. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1988), 3–12; reprinted in Benakis, *Texts and Studies*, 249–58; Linos G. Benakis, ‘Commentaries and Commentators on the Works of Aristotle (except the Logical ones) in Byzantium’, in B. Mojsisch and O. Pluta (eds), *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi. Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Kurt Flasch* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: B. R. Grüner, 1991), vol. 1, 45–54; reprinted in Benakis, *Texts and Studies*, 259–68.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Περὶ τῆς ὕλης καὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν ἱ. Critical edition with Modern Greek translation by L. G. Benakis in *Φιλοσοφία* (Athens, 1973), 339–81; reprinted in Benakis, *Texts and Studies*, 533–75.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Metochites’ chief work is his *Σημειώσεις γνωμικαί* ἱ (c. 1326), 120 chapters on various topics edited as *Miscellanea philosophica et historica* by C. G. Müller and T. Kiessling (Leipzig, 1821; reprinted Amsterdam, 1966).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Text in V. de Falco (ed.), *Ioannis Peditasimi in Aristotelis Analytica scholia selecta* (Naples, 1926).

⁽⁸¹⁾ Philotheos Kokkinos, *Discourse on Gregory, Archbishop of Thessalonica* 11 (ed. Tsames, Φιλοθέου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Κοκκίνου ἀγιολογικὰ ἔργα ἔκ. vol. 1, 437–8). Philotheos takes his anecdote from Gregory Palamas himself, who says in the first of his refutations of Gregoras that he is not prepared to take lessons on Aristotle from his opponent (who like himself had been a pupil of Metochites): *Against Gregoras* I, 14 (Christou IV, 241–2; Perrella II, 938–40).

⁽⁸²⁾ Even though Metochites regards Aristotle in general as a mere doxographer, in *Σημειώσεις γνωμικαί* 12 he praises him as an ἐταστής καὶ τεχνίτης τῆς λογικῆς and a γνώμων καὶ συνήγορος τῆς φύσεως.

⁽⁸³⁾ He refers thus to Plato several times when discussing astronomy in his dispute with Choumnos. In *Σημειώσεις γνωμικαί* 61 (ed. Bydén, line 23) he rates ὁ πάντα σοφὸς αὐτὸς Πλάτων above all other philosophers.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ On Metochites' philosophical approach the classic overviews are Hans-Georg Beck, *Theodoros Metochites, Die Krise des byzantinischen Weltbildes im 14. Jh.* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1952), and Ihor Ševčenko, *La vie intellectuelle et politique à Byzance sous les premiers Paléologues. Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos* (Brussels: Éditions de 'Byzantion', 1962). See now also Börje Bydén. “‘To every Argument there is a Counter-Argument’: Theodore Metochites’ Defence of Scepticism (*Semeiosis* 61)”, in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 183–208, to which is appended a critical edition of the text of *Σημειώσεις γνωμικαί* 61.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Metochites, *Σημειώσεις γνωμικαί* 61 (ed. Bydén, lines 73–86).

⁽⁸⁶⁾ On the widespread distrust of Aristotelian logic in this period, see Katerina Ierodiakonou, ‘The Anti-Logical Movement in the Fourteenth Century’, in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 219–36.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ On Gregoras' philosophical outlook, see Moschos, *Πλατονισμὸς ἢ Χριστιανισμός*, 101–77.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Moschos, *Πλατονισμὸς ἢ Χριστιανισμός*, 187–99.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Robert E. Sinkewicz, ‘A New Interpretation for the First Episode in the Controversy between Barlaam the Calabrian and Gregory Palamas’, *JTS* 31 (1982), 489–500; Robert E. Sinkewicz, ‘The Solutions addressed to George Lapithes by Barlaam the Calabrian and Their Philosophical Context’, *Mediaeval Studies* 43 (1981), 151–217; Robert E. Sinkewicz, ‘The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian’; Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*; Trizio, “‘Una è la verità’”.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Jean Meyendorff, ‘Un mauvais théologien de l’unité au XIV^e siècle: Barlaam le Calabrais’, in 1054–1954: *L’Église et les Églises* (Chévetogne, 1954; repr. in John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm: Historical, Theological and Social Problems* [London: Variorum Reprints, 1975] as Study V), vol. 2, 47–64, at 61: ‘La controverse palamite, à ses débuts, constitue essentiellement une opposition entre le nominalisme de Barlaam et le théologie de la grâce des moines byzantins.’ Curiously, Meyendorff also sees Barlaam as a Platonist but only by virtue of dependence on Ps.-Dionysius (‘Les débuts de la controverse hésychaste’, *Byzantion* 23 [1953], 87–120 [repr. in Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm*, as Study I], at 95–6; *Introduction*, 259–60).

⁽⁹¹⁾ Trizio, “‘Una è la verità’”, 114–18, 129–33, 136–40.

⁽⁹²⁾ Barlaam, *First Letter to Palamas* 30–9 (Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 216–24); cf. Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 31 (Christou I, 243; Perrella III, 466); Palamas, *Second Letter to Akindynos* 6 (Christou I, 223–4; Perrella III, 506) (both letters dating from autumn 1336).

⁽⁹³⁾ Barlaam, *First Letter to Palamas* 95 (Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 260–2); Barlaam, *Second Letter to Palamas* 30 (Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 322); cf. Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 34–5 (Christou I, 245–6; Perrella III, 470–2).

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Stephen R. L. Clark, ‘Silence in the Land of Logos’, in Constantinos Athanasopoulos (ed.), *Triune God: Incomprehensible but Knowable—The Philosophical and Theological Significance of St Gregory Palamas for Contemporary Philosophy and Theology* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 83–101, at 85. Nadal has gone through the indexes of the Christou volumes and located at least twenty citations from Aristotle, five from Plato, two from Plutarch, and one from Ps.-Aristotle (Nadal, *La résistance d’Akindynos*, ii, 103).

⁽⁹⁵⁾ David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 166. Bradshaw is here simply posing the question, but he answers it in the affirmative at 234–42.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Christoph Erismann, ‘St Gregory Palamas and Aristotle’s *Categories*’, in Athanasopoulos, *Triune God*, 132–42.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Erismann, ‘St Gregory Palamas’, 135, citing Palamas, *150 Chapters*, § 134.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters*, § 134, lines 12–14 (Sinkewicz, 238; Perrella III, 150).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Erismann, ‘St Gregory Palamas’, 136: ‘That which is accidental for us is eminent for God. This is one of the implications of the fact that Palamas states that *poiein* and *energein* should be attributed in the truest sense to God alone. *Alēthestata* in the sentence indicates that we must understand *poiein* according to a paradigmatic mode and not according to an accidental one.’

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Erismann, ‘St Gregory Palamas’, 140.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Torstein Theodor Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 186–200.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters*, § 75, lines 5–6 (Sinkewicz, 170; Perrella III, 84).

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 186.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 193–4.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 194, with reference to Gregory Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 6 (Meyendorff, ‘Lettre’, 18. 17–19. 11; Perrella III, 582). This letter was first published by Meyendorff (Jean Meyendorff, ‘Une lettre inédite de Grégoire Palamas à Akindynos. Texte et commentaire sur la troisième lettre de Palamas’, in *Theologia* 24 [1953], repr. in John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm*, study III) and is the version published in the Christou and Perrella editions of Palamas. In this version the phrase ‘lower divinity’ is quoted by Palamas from Barlaam’s treatise *Against the Messalians* and is repudiated in the sense attributed to it by Barlaam. Later, Nadal published a different version of Palamas’ *Third Letter to Akindynos* reconstructed from Akindynos’ refutation of it, as preserved in a single manuscript, Monacensis graecus 223 (J. S. Nadal, ‘La rédaction première de la Troisième lettre de Palamas à Akindynos’, in *OCP* 40 [1974], 233–85). Nadal believed that this was the original version, arguing that Palamas then redrafted the letter, perhaps to satisfy Athanasios

of Kyzikos, who had at first refused to sign the Synodal Tome of 1341 on account of what Palamas claimed were ‘falsified writings’ (cf. Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 92–4 [*Study*, 60–2]; Nadal, *La résistance d’Akindynos*, vol. 2, 164). Nadal offers cogent arguments which have been widely accepted.

(¹⁰⁶) Palamas, *150 Chapters*, 126. 1–4 (Sinkewicz, 228; Perrella III, 140).

(¹⁰⁷) Palamas, *150 Chapters*, 126. 15–20 (trans. Sinkewicz, 231).

(¹⁰⁸) Gregory Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 15 (Meyendorff, ‘Lettre’, 23. 27–9; Perrella III, 592).

(¹⁰⁹) John A. Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed. Palamite interpretations of the distinctions between God’s “essence” and “energies” in late Byzantium’, in Hinterberger and Schabel, *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History*, 263–372.

(¹¹⁰) Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 271.

(¹¹¹) Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 277.

(¹¹²) Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 371–2.

(¹¹³) Gregory Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* II, xii, 54 (Christou III, 126; Perrella II, 166): Οὐκ ἔστιν οὖν ἐννοῆσαι τομὴν ἢ διαίρεσιν κατ’ ἴσιν οὐδένα τρόπον οὐσίας τε καὶ ἐνεργείας θεοῦ; Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 273.

(¹¹⁴) For details of Nadal’s argument, see note 105, above.

(¹¹⁵) Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 277; cf. Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 15 (Meyendorff, ‘Lettre’, 23. 27–9; Perrella III, 592).

(¹¹⁶) Gregory Palamas, *Letter to the most powerful and pious lady [Anna] Palaiologina* 2–3 (Christou II, 545–6; Perrella III, 1022–6).

(¹¹⁷) Palamas, *Letter to [Anna] Palaiologina* 2 (Christou II, 545–6; Perrella III, 1022–4).

(¹¹⁸) Palamas, *Letter to [Anna] Palaiologina* 2 (Christou II, 546; Perrella III, 1024).

(¹¹⁹) Demetracopoulos, ‘Palamas transformed’, 274; cf. Palamas, *Apologia* 19 (Christou II, 111; Perrella I, 1014). The *Apologia* (Sinkewicz, ‘Gregory Palamas’, works no. 6) dates from autumn 1341.

(¹²⁰) Note also that for Palamas what is ‘only a concept in the mind’ (διανοίας μόνον θεώρημα) ‘will completely lack subsistence’ (ἀνυπόστατος ἔσται τελέως) *150 Chapters*, 136. 1–2 (Sinkewicz, 242; Perrella, III, 152).

(¹²¹) Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 371–2.

(¹²²) I have discussed this in greater detail in Norman Russell, ‘The Christological Context of Palamas’ Approach to Participation in God’, in Athanasopoulos, *Triune God*, 190–8. (Note that in this essay on p. 192, line 12 from the foot of the page, ‘from his humanity’ should read ‘from it’ [i.e. from his divinity].) Cf. Demetracopoulos’s discussion of the patristic use of ἐπινόια, ‘Palamas transformed’, 268–9, n. 16.

(¹²³) Georgios I. Mantzaridis, *Παλαμικά* (Thessaloniki: Pournaras, 1973, 3rd edn 1998). The last essay in this collection, ‘Ἡ περὶ θεώσεως τοῦ ἀνθρώπου διδασκαλία Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμῆ’, was published in English as Georgios I. Mantzaridis, *The Deification of Man: St*

Gregory Palamas and the Orthodox Tradition, trans. Liadain Sherrard (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984).

⁽¹²⁴⁾ Amphilochios Radović, Τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος κατὰ τὸν ἅγιον Γρηγόριον Παλαμῶν (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1973; repr. 1991). The work has recently been translated into French with a valuable preface by Jean-Claude Larchet and an interview with the metropolitan by Jivko Panev: Metropolit Amphiloque (Radović) du Monténégro et du Littoral, *Le mystère de la sainte Trinité selon saint Grégoire Palamas*, trans. Yvan Koenig (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2012).

⁽¹²⁵⁾ He cites Jugie only twice (Radović, *Le mystère*, 78 n.1, 289 n.2), on both occasions with reference to Jugie's DTC article on Palamas, and mentions him once in passing as, like Candal, lacking an understanding of Palamas (Radović, *Le mystère*, 243 n.4).

⁽¹²⁶⁾ Meyendorff's *Introduction* is cited in only three footnotes (on pp. 149, 243, and 260). In the footnote on p. 260 both Meyendorff and Romanides are criticized for not fully understanding Aristotle's category of relation.

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 196–7, 201–3; cf. Palamas, *First apodictic treatise*, prologue (Christou I, 23–4; Perrella I, 6–8).

⁽¹²⁸⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 218; cf. Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* I, vii, 26 (Christou III, 59; Perrella II, 40).

⁽¹²⁹⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 235–9.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 239–87.

⁽¹³¹⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 239.

⁽¹³²⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 240. Radović states unequivocally that 'the whole problem of the difference between Palamas and his adversaries is above all of a hermeneutic nature' (Radović, *Le mystère*, 240–1).

⁽¹³³⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 243–4.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 244. On this point Radović finds himself in agreement with von Ivanka, with a reference to the French translation of *Plato Christianus* (Paris: PUF, 1990), 373.

⁽¹³⁵⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 261.

⁽¹³⁶⁾ Radović, *Le mystère*, 272–3, with copious references to a broad range of Palamas' texts.

⁽¹³⁷⁾ Jacques Lison, *L'Esprit répandu. La pneumatologie de Grégoire Palamas* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1994).

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, v.

⁽¹³⁹⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 279.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 279.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ A. Radović, 'Le Filioque et l'énergie créée de la Sainte Trinité selon la doctrine de saint Grégoire Palamas', *Messenger de l'exarchat du patriarche russe en Europe occidentale* 23 (1975), 11–44.

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 94–5; cf. Mantzaridis, *Deification*, 37–8 (also cited by Lison), who holds a similar view to that of Radović.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 89. Besides the well-known chapters in the *150 Chapters* (§§125 to 135), Lison draws attention—for the first time, he says—to a passage in *Against Bekkos* 2 (Christou I, 164; Perrella II, 1228), where Palamas says that the Holy Spirit is described by some (Fathers) as ‘the communion and love of the Father and the Son’.

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 96.

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 125–30.

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Lison, *L'Esprit*, 278.

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Stavros Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως: Ἡ σύνθεση χριστολογίας καὶ πνευματολογίας στὸ ἔργο τοῦ ἁγίου Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ (Athens: Ekdoseis Domos, 2001). Κοινωνία is a favourite term of Zizioulas, but the phrase κοινωνία θεώσεως is actually from Palamas himself, *Second Apodictic Treatise* 78 (Christou I, 149; Perrella I, 260).

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Stavros Yangazoglou, review of Jacques Lison, *L'Esprit répandu*, in *Orthodoxes Forum* 1 (1996), 128–32. On Lossky's two economies, see Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke, 1957), chapters 7 and 8, and Yangazoglou's discussion in Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 326–43.

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ Yangazoglou, review of Lison, 130.

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 145–7, 190–6.

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters*, §36 (Sinkewicz, 123; Perrella III, 38–40); cf. Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 192–4.

⁽¹⁵²⁾ Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 194–5.

⁽¹⁵³⁾ Palamas, *Homily* 24, 2; Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 263.

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 317.

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Palamas, *Second Apodictic Treatise* 18 (Christou I, 95; Perrella I, 152); Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 327.

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 425–9.

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Dionysios the Areopagite, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* I, 3, 376A (Heil and Ritter, 66).

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Palamas, *On divine participation* 7 (Christou II, 142–3; Perrella I, 1076–8); cf. Yangazoglou, Κοινωνία θεώσεως, 438–56.

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Kern, ‘Dukhovnye predki’, 131.

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Sinkewicz, ‘Gregory Palamas’, 173.

Part II

Raising the Larger Questions

What does doctrinal development mean?

Palamas was frequently accused of innovation (καινοτομία)—literally, of cutting a new furrow. His teaching on essence and energies, on different ‘divinities’, on uncreated grace, on the mode of the creature’s participation in God, and so on, was regarded by many as novel and therefore, by definition, as false. Revelation had been concluded by the founding of the Church and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Nothing could be added to it except by way of explication (ἀνάπτυξις) in the manner of the Ecumenical Councils and the Fathers of the Church. The modern concept of the development of dogma only goes back to the nineteenth century, to theologians ‘mesmerized by the evolutionary axiom that the less complex must always precede the more complex, and that there must be a line of progressive development’.¹ For both Palamites and anti-Palamites, only heresy had a history. True doctrine was given once and for all and was immutable, except for the *metathesis* that had occurred between the old and the new covenants.² That did not preclude the adoption of new terms when they were considered necessary for safeguarding the truth.³ Nor did it put the content of revelation beyond the reach of rational investigation. But it did mean that new insights had to be presented simply as restatements of old ideas. In this chapter, we shall consider the methodological issues raised by the hesychast controversy. These may be summed up as a series of questions. First, what is the relation between philosophy and theology? Palamas and his contemporaries made a distinction between ‘outer wisdom’ (the thinking of the pagan Greek philosophers) and ‘inner wisdom’ (the thinking of the Church Fathers). Was Barlaam right in integrating the two, claiming that all truth is (p.134) one? Secondly, how is the testimony of the Church Fathers to be used, especially, as often happens, when there are differences among them? Thirdly, what is the relationship between dogmatic and mystical theology? What dogmatic language is appropriate for expressing personal experience? And finally, how do you decide on an authoritative solution when after exhaustive debate there are still sharp disagreements? Let us examine each of these questions in turn.

What is the Relation between Philosophy and Theology?

In the fourteenth century, philosophical studies were pursued quite differently in the Latin West and the Greek East. In the West, since the revival of philosophy in the eleventh century by the Benedictine monk Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109)—his famous definition of philosophical inquiry was ‘faith seeking understanding’ (*fides quaerens intellectum*)—philosophy had been pursued as an adjunct to theology. With the emergence of the University of Paris after Anselm’s death as the leading centre of philosophical study, the mastery of grammar, logic, and rhetoric (the *trivium*), on the basis of Aristotelian texts translated into Latin at first from Arabic, became the preliminary stage for the study of theology. The most famous Paris philosopher of the mid-fourteenth century was Palamas’ exact contemporary, John Buridan (c.1300–c.1361).⁴ Buridan was unusual in that he was a secular cleric at a time when the Dominicans dominated the university, and he also remained a master of arts when the majority of his fellow-teachers went on to take a doctorate in theology. But in every other respect he exemplifies the philosophical culture of his age. He was a cleric, a member of a professional guild (the University of Paris), and an expert in ‘the supreme art’ (*ars artium*), the art of logic.

Buridan wrote a highly influential textbook on logic (the *Summulae de Dialectica*), and in his teaching in the arts faculty of the university applied logical method systematically to metaphysics and the natural sciences. Every problem was grounded in logic. His most famous remark, made in connection with the debates provoked by William of Ockham (c.1235–1347), was: ‘I believe that such great controversy has arisen among the disputants because of a lack of logic (*ex defectu logicae*).’⁵ That is not to say that he confused logic with theology—far from it, for logic and theology were not only separate academic (p.135) disciplines, but were based on different kinds of premises. Even though Aristotle calls metaphysics ‘theology’, says Buridan,

metaphysics differs from theology in the fact that although each considers God and those things that pertain to divinity, metaphysics only considers them as regards what can be proved and implied, or inductively inferred, by demonstrative reason. But theology has for its principles articles [of faith], which are believed quite apart from their evidentness, and further, considers whatever can be deduced from articles of this kind.⁶

Thus metaphysics is the most certain of sciences because it considers the nature of being, even the being of God (which is most removed from us), from the point of view of rational first principles—being *qua* being. From these first principles, others can be demonstrated. Theology, however, makes its inductions from the data of revelation. If the procedures of correct reasoning are followed, its findings are as equally certain as those of metaphysics, but they are based on premises of a different order.

Theology at the University of Paris, like philosophy, was a rigorous academic discipline. As Buridan pointed out, the two disciplines differed not by their methodology but only by the nature of the premises on which they based their arguments. In the theological field Palamas’ older contemporary, John Duns Scotus (c.1266–1308) illustrates this approach perfectly. In Scotus we ‘see theology unashamedly at its most complex and specialized, in perhaps its most technically proficient philosophical practitioner’.⁷ His discussions of God begin with a proof for the existence of one God, then show how the one God is triadic through the emanation of the second and third persons, and next how this necessitates a single divine essence. All this can be shown by natural reason, even if demonstrative arguments cannot be employed with regard to the Trinity.⁸ There is no need to cite patristic authorities. The entire structure of theological thinking follows logically from the fundamental propositions of the Christian faith.

The conditions under which philosophy was studied in the East differed markedly from those of the University of Paris. The Western university system was entirely under the control of the Church and was designed for the training of clerics. The Eastern programme of education had as its goal the training of candidates for service in the civil administration. Schools of higher education were not corporations regulated by the Church but were private institutions. The most famous of these in the fourteenth century were the schools of Theodore Metochites in Constantinople and Thomas Magistros (c.1275–after (p.136) 1347) in Thessaloniki. At these schools, students acquired an excellent general education (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία) which included the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric and logic) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy). Philosophy at this elementary level was confined to logic, but was nevertheless technically comparable to the teaching available in the West.⁹ Alumni of the two schools included most of the protagonists on both sides of the hesychast controversy: Gregory Palamas and Nikephoros Gregoras had studied under Metochites; Philotheos Kokkinos, Gregory Akindynos, and the Kydones brothers, Demetrios and Prochoros, had studied under Magistros. There were differences in emphasis between the schools. Thomas

Magistros was a philologist and classical scholar, whereas Theodore Metochites was a philosopher with a preference for Plato over Aristotle. These emphases are reflected in the writings of their students, particularly in the careful patristic scholarship of Magistros' pupil, Akindynos, and in the Platonic metaphysics of Metochites' disciple, Gregoras.

Although the schools were private institutions, they were loosely overseen by state officials. The official charged with the supervision of philosophical study was the Consul of the Philosophers (ὁ ὕπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων β). The office had been created for the polymath Michael Psellos (1018–after 1081) by the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in recognition of his intellectual attainments, but had lapsed after the condemnation for heresy in 1082 of his pupil and successor John Italos (c.1025–after 1082) on charges including the adoption of Neoplatonic doctrines of the transmigration of souls and the pre-existence of the world. The office was revived again in 1166 by the emperor Manuel Komnenos for the scholar and subsequent patriarch, Michael Anchialos (d.1178), with a view to strengthening the study of Aristotle and combatting the influence of Platonism. At around the time when Palamas began his studies with Theodore Metochites, the office was held by the Aristotelian scholar John Pediasimos (c.1250–c.1310). The Consul of the Philosophers, however, was not the head of a professional body of philosophers. Higher philosophical studies were pursued by independent scholars, some of whom, like Nikephoros Choumnos (c.1250–1327) and Theodore Metochites, were men of high social standing with important positions in the imperial government.

The study of theology, unlike philosophy, was pursued in an ecclesiastical context, but not as an academic discipline or element of professional training. As Paul Magdalino has put it with regard to the twelfth century (and there is no reason to believe the situation was any different in the fourteenth), 'the concepts and techniques of theological writing were readily absorbed by men who had mastered the rhetorical and philosophical curriculum in which the Fathers themselves had been educated; for such men theology was an (p.137) automatic application of their education.'¹⁰ It is true that a patriarchal school, headed by three imperially funded teachers, the *didaskaloi* of the Psalms, of the Epistles, and of the Gospels, had been founded at Hagia Sophia in 1107 by a novel of the emperor Alexios I Komnenos, but it is not known whether this school was formally reconstituted after the recapture of Constantinople from the Latins in 1261. In any case, it seems likely that the main duty of the *didaskaloi* was to give rhetorically polished theological discourses at Hagia Sophia for the edification of the general public rather than for the formation of clerical students. Indeed, the taste for public theological debate was a notable feature of Constantinopolitan life from the age of the ecumenical councils right up to the fall of the city in 1453.

Serious theological work was largely the preserve of the monasteries. Here a clear distinction was drawn between the 'outer wisdom' of the pagan Hellenes and the 'inner wisdom' of the Church Fathers. Gregory of Nazianzus (329/30–389/90), whose *Orations* were among the most widely studied theological works in Byzantium, had addressed Eunomius as a 'dialectician and babbler' who was deluded in thinking that what he regarded as discourse (λόγος) and contemplation (θεωρία) was true wisdom.¹¹ Gregory was prepared to allow Eunomius to philosophize about physics and ethics but warned him off theology: the encounter with God was attained in Jesus Christ alone, and in this life only dimly.¹² This remained the standard attitude in the monastic tradition. Theoleptos of Philadelphia (c.1250–1322), whom Palamas claimed as one of his own teachers, castigated 'those who devote all their attention to profane wisdom (τῇ θύραθεν σοφίᾳ)', as 'captives of conceit' who 'imagine that that they have a wealth of knowledge but in reality [...] are impoverished of truth

because they have not a trace of the humility which is bestowed by [prayer] and which brings with it a way of thought free from deceit'.¹³ True wisdom is attained only by prayer, which generates the divine love that 'awakens the mind to the manifestation of hidden things'.¹⁴

Palamas himself frequently expresses his hostility to Hellenic philosophy. The opening treatise of his first *Triad* (spring 1338) is dedicated to the exposition of the fundamental difference between true and false knowledge. It is utterly impossible on the basis of 'the outer wisdom' (ἐκ τῆς ἑξῶ σοφίας ἥ) to discern the images of the divine *logoi* in the human soul: 'The knowledge that hunts for what is according to the divine image from this wisdom is therefore (p.138) pseudo-knowledge.'¹⁵ Palamas' mention of 'what is according to the divine image' (τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα θεϊαν) recalls Genesis 1:26. Pagan philosophy can in no way lead us to an understanding of the nature of the human person created in the image and likeness of God; such an understanding is the fruit of revelation alone. In the light of this conviction, Palamas is scandalized by Barlaam's claim that because truth is one, the products of divine revelation and human reasoning may be considered in some sense on a par with each other.

Barlaam makes his statement on the unity of truth in a treatise , now lost , called Περὶ λόγων.¹⁶ Palamas responds to it in the first treatise of his second *Triad* (spring-summer 1339), where he quotes the offending passage:

The words of those who perform sacred functions and the wisdom that resides in them aim at the same goal and attain the same end as the philosophy deriving from the outer disciplines: the discovery of truth. For the truth in all things is one, whether given directly by God to the apostles at the outset, or acquired by us through study.¹⁷

This has been shown by Michele Trizio to derive from the commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* by the fifth-century pagan Neoplatonist, Syrianus.¹⁸ What Syrianus does is to harmonize the two different types of wisdom found on the one hand in the theologians (i.e. the Greek poets) and on the other in the philosophers. Barlaam transposes the harmonization of this distinction to a different context, contrasting the apostles who received the truth directly from Christ with us who have to work it out laboriously by intellectual effort. The oneness of truth (guaranteed by the principle of non-contradiction) means that both paths are valid routes to the same end. Moreover, if truth is one, there is a further inference to be made. In so far as the ancient philosophers have uttered what is true about God, says Barlaam, 'I cannot refuse to accept that the cause of this is divine illumination'.¹⁹ In other words, the pagan philosophers were inspired by God in the same way as the Church Fathers (provided, of course, they did not contradict them) and could be used accordingly.

Palamas will have none of this. For him there are two kinds of wisdom, one human the other divine; only the Church Fathers can be said to have been illuminated by divine wisdom. 'Outer' philosophical learning has never produced any worthwhile fruit and is certainly not salvific, whereas 'the wisdom of the divine sayings' (the Bible) brings us reconciliation and salvation. How, then, can we discover that the truth in these two is one?²⁰ That is not to say that (p.139) philosophy in itself is useless. 'The wisdom of the Spirit' lacks nothing but it is susceptible of clarification and explication . The cautious application of philosophical techniques can be helpful in the task of biblical exegesis (πρὸς τὴν τῶν λογίων σαφήνειαν ἥ) but not if we conflate spiritual wisdom with profane wisdom by maintaining that truth is one.²¹

It is therefore not philosophy as such that Palamas repudiates (after all, St Basil had approved of the 'despoiling of the Egyptians')²² but what he takes to be Barlaam's attempt to abolish

the vital distinction between the Scriptures and the pagan philosophers in relation to salvation. He is fond of quoting Paul's rhetorical question: 'Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?' (1 Corinthians 1:20). When he refers to the philosophers in his letters to Barlaam, it is to emphasize their inadequacy as guides to truth. Genuine contemplation cannot be the product of the conjoining (συζυγία) of pagan philosophy with divinely revealed doctrine.²³ For how could Socrates and Plato, if divinely illuminated, have spoken approvingly of illicit unions and paederasty? Even Plotinus and Proclus were inspired only by their daemon under the form of a serpent.²⁴ As for Aristotle, his notion of God is pedestrian (χαμερή) and he is quite mistaken about the non-immortality of the soul.²⁵ The pagan philosophers are poor guides to truth; they can certainly not be regarded as illuminated by God.

Palamas' opinion of the pagan philosophers may be mostly negative but it is not based on ignorance of the Greek philosophical tradition. His quotations and allusions testify to an acquaintance with the history of philosophy and a familiarity with the major sources. He quotes a fragment of a Presocratic philosopher, probably from Diogenes Laertius,²⁶ and several passages from Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* and Mauricius' *Life of Proclus*.²⁷ A number of philosophers are mentioned by him in passing.²⁸ Those he holds in highest esteem are Aristotle and Plotinus, but for their technical expertise rather (p.140) than the content of their teaching.²⁹ In his general contempt for the Greek philosophers, he takes his cue from the Cappadocians.³⁰ Like them, he has studied the 'outer wisdom', and like them, he rejects it as a source of higher truth: the natural philosophy of the Greeks is useful, and indeed has been given by God; but the mind that pursues the 'outer philosophy' fails to attain the proper goal of wisdom, which is the knowledge of God (θεογνωσία).³¹

The Cappadocians set the tone for the whole of the later Greek monastic tradition. In a passage reproduced by Palamas, Gregory of Nazianzus quotes a famous saying from Plato's *Timaeus* (without attributing it to Plato): 'To grasp God by the intellect is difficult but to express him is impossible (θεὸν νοῆσαι μὲν χαλεπὸν, φράσαι δὲ ἀδύνατον)', as one of the Greek theologians has said.³² The contextualization of this saying by Christian authors in Late Antiquity has been the subject of a recent study, which has shown that there were two different ways in which the saying was understood.³³ It was first invoked by Celsus in his anti-Christian treatise, *The True Doctrine*, to prove that the Greeks were better guides than the Christians for arriving at truth, and that Plato was the more effective teacher of theology. In his refutation of Celsus, Origen advanced two arguments against Plato. First, the incarnation of the Logos has given human beings access to the divine in a manner unknown to Plato. Secondly, human nature cannot know God except by grace.³⁴ The emperor Julian reacted to this critique in his *Against the Galilaeans*, to which Cyril of Alexandria responded in his *Against Julian*, but with a different slant on Plato's saying. Cyril is clear that God cannot be contemplated unless he illuminates the contemplator's mind,³⁵ but unlike Origen he sees no opposition between natural knowledge and divine revelation, finding Plato in concordance with Proverbs 25:2 ('It is the glory of God to conceal things; but the glory of kings to search things out') and 1 Corinthians 13:12 ('For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face').³⁶ It was Origen's approach, however, that came to predominate in Byzantine Christianity because this was the approach taken up by Gregory of Nazianzus and popularized in his twenty-eighth *Oration*.³⁷

(p.141) Plato's saying, recontextualized in this way in the Greek Christian tradition, became symbolic of Hellenic hubris, particularly with the twist Palamas gave to it: 'It is difficult but not impossible to grasp God with the intellect (χαλεπὸν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀδύνατον νοῆσαι τὸν θεόν)'.³⁸ The incomprehensibility of God was actually a point of agreement between Palamas

and Barlaam; where they differed was in their assessment of the way in which God, although inaccessible by nature, becomes accessible to human beings. Palamas was prepared to concede that his opponent was right on the inapplicability of demonstrative arguments to God,³⁹ but he could not follow Barlaam in his conclusion that there is therefore no sure knowledge of God. That would be to deny the reality of contemplation and of ecclesial experience in general.

For Palamas and his Greek contemporaries, philosophy was not simply a neutral instrument to be used, as in the West, to help us clarify our thinking. The surviving corpus of Hellenic philosophical texts carried immense cultural weight. The teachings of the non-Christian philosophers were siren voices that exercised a constant pull on Greek intellectuals.⁴⁰ Paul had spoken of two wisdoms, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world.⁴¹ The monastic tradition vehemently rejected the latter, and Palamas writes from within that tradition. ‘Since the divine,’ he says, ‘is superior to all thought and all discourse, it is both beyond dialectics (for it supremely transcends imagination and opinion) and beyond apodictics.’⁴² Theology, he insists, is not a science: ‘there is no touching or knowledge of [the divine].’⁴³ God is approached through grace, not through intellectual effort.

Barlaam shares Palamas’ apophaticism, but with a difference. Sinkewicz notes Barlaam’s early statement of ‘traditional views on the limitations of philosophy with respect to knowledge of God’ but he believes that Barlaam made ‘an apparently complete volte-face’ in his later letters as ‘emphasis on the gnoseological character of the experience [of illumination] eventually led the Calabrian to (p.142) understand philosophy as a legitimate way to God’.⁴⁴ This opinion seems to ignore Barlaam’s Platonist perspective. The limitations of philosophy that the Calabrian emphasizes are simply the limitations of Aristotelian syllogistic. True philosophy is on a different level. There is something divine in us (τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν θεῖον) which when cultivated allows God to unite himself with us.⁴⁵ This is the philosophy that Barlaam says he could not bring himself to ignore, and which impelled him for the sake of truth to write his treatises.⁴⁶

Throughout the debate, Plato casts a long shadow. When Palamas denies that theology is a science, he is not thinking of the way theology was pursued at the University of Paris. What he has in mind is Plato’s commendation of the idea of the Good as the ‘supreme topic of systematic study’ (ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα μέγιστον μάθημα ἦ).⁴⁷ Barlaam does not respond in the Byzantine way by quoting copiously from the Fathers but consistently deploys intellectual arguments. Yet although probably familiar with scholastic theology,⁴⁸ he refrains from using scholastic techniques of disputation. He too has Plato, along with Plotinus, Proclus, and Syrianus, constantly at his elbow. He objects to being considered at odds with the Fathers—‘our divine Fathers’—and in agreement with the Hellenes,⁴⁹ but the philosophers, inspired as they also are by God, have an authority which is not inferior to that of the Christian teachers. On that point there could be no common ground between Barlaam and the monastic tradition for which Palamas was the spokesman.

How is the Testimony of the Church Fathers to be Used?

In his first letter to Palamas (summer of 1336), Barlaam conducts his arguments almost entirely on the philosophical level, rarely alluding to patristic sources.⁵⁰ The only Church Father he mentions by name is Dionysius the Areopagite.⁵¹ (p.143) The point at issue is how plurality—or more precisely, threeness—may be attributed to God, who (in Neoplatonic

terms) is ‘unity-in-itself’ (αὐτοέν). Barlaam says that ‘the divine Dionysius rightly declares [in the *Divine Names*] that the mode by which God is said to be three is unknown.’⁵² He then poses the question: ‘Since everything we speak of is said to be such either by virtue of participation, or existence, or causality, how is God said to be three and a triad?’⁵³ God cannot be three by virtue of participation in threeness ‘once we have formed a prior conception of the number three and of a triad as it is in itself’, because he would then be three like any three objects, and there is no reason why he should not be more than three. Nor can God be three by virtue of existence, because his threeness cannot be prior to his essence, for his existence is the triad itself. The threeness of God is therefore not susceptible to apodictic demonstration; it can only be the subject of direct apprehension. But it is universally held that the essence of God is not the subject of direct apprehension (ἀκατάληπτος εἶναι). Therefore, God is not a triad by virtue of existence.⁵⁴ There remains the category of causality. Light and wisdom exist because they have been caused, but the threeness of God cannot be a product of the idea of the number three.⁵⁵ Dionysius’ statement on the radically apophatic nature of God is thus confirmed by rational argument: God’s triadicity cannot be proved apodictically; we must simply confess our ignorance.

In his second letter to Barlaam (late spring–early summer 1337), Palamas goes over Barlaam’s argument based on the quotation from Dionysius’ *Divine Names*, and responds to it in detail.⁵⁶ What he objects to first is the way Barlaam lifts the quotation out of context. ‘The philosopher’ does not appreciate, he says, that Dionysius is not saying that the monad cannot be known by any being; he is saying that the monad is known and hymned but not as a being among the various beings known to us. Dionysius’ ‘monad’ indicates not number but divinity. Secondly, Dionysius’ statement must be interpreted within the broader context of the Christian tradition, in accordance with Paul’s declaration that God’s ‘eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made’,⁵⁷ and Gregory the Theologian’s insistence that when he speaks of the incomprehensibility of God (p.144) he is referring to the mode, not the fact, of his existence.⁵⁸ Thirdly, deductive arguments have their value—the existence of a creator can be deduced from the existence of creatures—but the importance of Aristotelian syllogistic in the domain of theology must not be exaggerated. At this point, Palamas lobs Plato’s famous saying back at Barlaam (taking care this time to quote Plato accurately): ‘To grasp God by the intellect is difficult but to express him is impossible’.⁵⁹ What transcends language can in some degree be grasped by intuition. The total agnosticism professed by Barlaam on the basis of the inadmissibility of apodictic proofs with regard to the divine makes the experience of God impossible.

Palamas then turns to the three modes of being proposed by Barlaam: by participation, by existence, or by causality.⁶⁰ Participation and existence can be set aside, he says, because they are self-evident. Causality, however, calls for discussion. Behind Barlaam’s argument about the difficulty of attributing number to God (i.e. to assert that God is three or even that God is one implies that God must be caused) lies the Platonic theory of Forms: for any specific number of things to exist, the Form of that number must be prior to them. So far as Palamas is concerned, however, there is no problem about saying God is one, and indeed the saints confirm this. God is the cause of one, but the reverse is not true, otherwise God could not be the cause of anything. Dionysius cannot be used by Barlaam to support specious positions (σοφίσματα) he has reached on philosophical grounds that belong properly to the ‘outer’ wisdom.

In his *Second Letter to Palamas*, Barlaam cites Dionysius as a text serving as a springboard for his philosophical reflections. Akindynos, who appeals to the same passage from the *Divine Names* in the third treatise of his first refutation of Palamas' *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite*,⁶¹ treats Dionysius differently.⁶² The Areopagite comes at the head of a catena of patristic passages testifying to the manner in which God, who is present everywhere and penetrates all things, is nevertheless a unity. If Barlaam analyses the nature of our (p.145) knowledge of God, Akindynos is concerned with the nature of our participatory relationship with him. In the passage in the *Dialogue* on which Akindynos comments, Palamas had spoken of different degrees of participation. Only the saints participate in the whole of God—not in his essence but nevertheless in the whole of God—'because by means of his own grace the whole of God is present and active in them and is known through them in a unified, simple and undivided manner; but they do not in the least participate in his essence, because they do not end up as gods by nature'.⁶³ Participation in the whole of God but not in his essence (because in that case a human being would become the same as God) entails for Palamas the existence of a reality which is fully God but not the same as the essence. For Akindynos this compromises God's simplicity. Palamas' doctrine, in his view, implies a Neoplatonic hierarchy of divine beings, 'a multitude of uncreated divinities, unequal and dissimilar with regard to each other, superior and inferior', to which he opposes Dionysius' text from Chapter XIII of the *Divine Names* on the return from the Many to the One.⁶⁴

For all the disputants in the hesychast controversy Dionysius carried immense authority. It was taken for granted that he stood in immediate succession to the apostles, and for his theological insight could only be compared with Gregory the Theologian himself. Akindynos goes on to quote Dionysius' text on 'the One and the Many' at some length in order to demonstrate that Palamas is clearly contradicted by patristic teaching. He follows his quotation with the following comment:

As for you, there is no doubt that you declare the Divinity to be the cause of beings in the plural, given that each of his powers is the cause of different things, whereas the great Dionysius, as we have heard, declares that the Divinity is a sole cause, in the singular, of all things, even if the things produced are multiple and the modes of production are numerous and different. You, for your part, speak of a number and a multitude of supra-essential divinities. He, by contrast, says that there is only one supra-essential reality, and that the number participates in the essence. He leads us to that which is beyond the being of One and which comes before all unity and before all plurality. But you, you teach a plurality which is not only emancipated from any 'one' whatever, but is always and only a plurality, if it is true that we participate at the same time in several different uncreated divinities, having been produced by them, by one which accords us essence, by another which gives us life, by another wisdom, by another illumination, by another divinization, and by another which does something else for us.⁶⁵

(p.146) Chapter XIII of the *Divine Names* is the chapter in which Dionysius lays the greatest stress on divine unity. The subject of the whole treatise is the relationship between the One and the Many. In this relationship there is an overall pattern of procession and return. The early chapters of the treatise discuss the procession. From the One come the three persons of the Trinity (although each is individually the One). Through the overflowing of goodness, God proceeds to a further (external) plurality in his creation of the world, and next to his entry into the world through the Incarnation, when 'ineffably the simple Jesus became composite', though 'without change or confusion in his own constitution'.⁶⁶ After much discussion of unity and differentiation, the scriptural names applied to God being distinct

from him and yet not distinct, the last chapter emphasizes the return to transcendent unity, when the soul is ultimately brought into union with God ‘so far as it is possible for us to be united with him’.⁶⁷

Akindynos is an acute student of Dionysius. His fundamental complaint is that Palamas fails to hold unity and plurality in a correct balance . By calling the names , or attributes, of God ‘divinities’ (θεότητες) he reifies them, detaching them permanently from the One and thus rendering the return to unity impossible. He makes a valid point, but exaggerates it. In an earlier treatise, he had accused Palamas of taking single passages from the Fathers and interpreting them out of context.⁶⁸ Here he seems to be giving due weight to Dionysius’ account of the return (ἐπιστροφή) to unity with a God who transcends even number, but without also keeping in view Dionysius’ teaching on the procession (πρόοδος) of God ‘outside’ himself by an ‘ek-static’ movement towards his creation. If Palamas overemphasizes the One’s descent into plurality as a result of the procession, Akindynos does the same with regard to the unification that accomplishes the return.

Which of the three—Barlaam, Palamas, or Akindynos—is the best Dionysian exegete? Barlaam is concerned mainly with epistemology and on this limited level is correct in saying that according to Dionysius the mode of God’s oneness and threeness transcends human knowledge. Palamas’ claim that Dionysius is only saying that God is not a finite being like the beings we are generally familiar with is an argument *ad hominem*. Palamas is on stronger ground, however, in his debate with Akindynos. Both men are right in stressing the importance of taking the context of patristic texts into consideration. Considering the broader context, Palamas seems justified in seeing in Dionysius’ processions a real multiplication of divinity in ‘a mode of existence that is other than the essential’.⁶⁹ Akindynos, however, in his anxiety that the unity of God should not be compromised, limits (p.147) the degree to which the divine penetrates the created world. Palamas in this respect seems to have entered more fully into Dionysius’ thinking.⁷⁰

What is the Relationship between Dogmatic and Mystical Theology?

The distinction between dogmatic theology and mystical theology is a modern one. The expression ‘dogmatic theology’ seems to have been first used in the seventeenth century by Denys Petau for the title of his great work, the *Dogmata theologica*.⁷¹ It refers to a systematic theology deduced rationally from first principles in the scholastic manner. ‘Mystical theology’ is a much older expression, originating with Dionysius the Areopagite (as the title of the shortest of his four treatises), but going back in its essentials to St Paul’s life ‘in Christ’ and St John’s teaching on seeing and knowing the Father through the person of Jesus.⁷² Originally, the word ‘mystical’ referred to the secret purposes of God, or the hidden spiritual meaning of Scripture, which is how we find it most commonly used by Origen. But Origen is also the first to connect ‘mystical’ with contemplation, an association taken up and developed by Gregory of Nyssa.⁷³ For the Cappadocian, one who studies the depths of the mystery of the doctrine of God ‘receives in his soul in an ineffable manner a modest degree of apprehension of the doctrine of divine knowledge’.⁷⁴ But this is only the beginning. Those who are able to ascend the mountain with Moses into the divine darkness enter into an experiential knowledge of God (θεογνωσία) which, ever-deepening, is never exhausted. The sense of the mystical as direct intuitive knowledge of God undergoes further development with Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor. ‘Thus *theologia*, the summit of

contemplation, will be, for Maximus, not a knowledge of God by the rational soul, knowing him in itself and recognizing itself as his image, but a going out from itself, an ecstasy.’⁷⁵ In St Maximus’ words, the sign of true contemplative prayer is when ‘at the very onset of prayer the intellect is so ravished by the divine and infinite light that it is aware neither of itself nor of any other created thing, but (p.148) only of Him who through love has activated such radiance in it’.⁷⁶ Mystical theology in the patristic tradition is thus simply theology in its deepest sense, characterized by a direct and ecstatic apprehension of God.

On turning to the fourteenth century, we find that something has changed. When Palamas discusses the meaning of the word theology, he makes a distinction between discourse *about* God and the experience *of* God (a distinction not unlike the one we make today): ‘Theology (θεολογία),’ he says, ‘is as remote from the direct vision of God in light (τῆς ἐν φωτὶ θεοπείας) and as distinct from conversing directly with God (τῆς πρὸς θεὸν ὁμιλίας) as knowing is different from possessing; for to say something about God and to encounter God are not the same thing.’⁷⁷ What has caused the change? The answer perhaps lies in the Byzantine experience of theological debate as an opportunity for elegant rhetorical performance. In the early eleventh century, Symeon the New Theologian had deplored what was passing for theology in his own day:

We think we will receive the full knowledge of God’s truth by means of worldly wisdom (διὰ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου σοφίας), and fancy that this mere reading of the God-inspired writings of the saints is to comprehend Orthodoxy, and that this is an exact and certain knowledge of the Holy Trinity. Nor is this all, but the more august among us foolishly suppose that the contemplation which comes to pass only through the Spirit in those who are worthy is the same as the thoughts produced by their own reasoning. How ridiculous! How callous!⁷⁸

Palamas writes in the same tradition. A ‘theology’ that is the result of the application of the ‘outer’ wisdom to sacred texts bears no comparison with the direct experience of God in contemplation. Indeed, mystical theology is not something that can be acquired from the study of texts at all:

The principle of spiritual contemplation is the good, which is acquired by purity of life, together with true knowledge of beings and the genuine understanding of what pertains to them. This is a knowledge which arises not from intellectual study (μὴ ἐκ μαθημάτων) but from purity, for this alone can discern what is truly good and useful and what is not so ; and its end, which is the pledge of the age to come, is an unknowing which is superior to knowing (ὕπερ γινῶσιν ἄγνοια), and a knowledge which is beyond conceptual thinking (ὕπερ ἔννοιαν γινῶσις), the mystical and ineffable contemplation and taste of eternal light.⁷⁹

Yet that is not to say that the dogmatic content of the teaching of the Fathers may be detached from mystical experience. Palamas quotes copious patristic (p.149) testimonies to support the contention that his distinction between the essence and the energies accords fully with the Christian tradition. It was a fundamental principle accepted by all parties in the hesychast controversy that what was contradicted by the Fathers could not be true. The best way of doing theology was by the exegesis of patristic and conciliar teaching.

Palamas always remained conscious of the dogmatic implications of the positions he adopted. At the Constantinopolitan council of 1351, the debate at the first session, which was held on 28 May, revolved around his claim that his doctrine of the energies was not an addition (προσθήκη) to the body of Christian doctrine but an explication (ἀνάπτυξις) of the teaching of the Sixth Ecumenical Council of 680–681.⁸⁰ The latter council had decreed that Christ has two wills, a divine will and a human will, in virtue of his being a single hypostasis which was

both fully human and fully divine without confusion or division, as taught by the Council of Chalcedon. The Monothelite position had evolved as a compromise designed to reconcile the non-Chalcedonian monophysites (or ‘miaphysites’), who held that since Christ was a single subject his two natures, divine and human, could be separated only in thought, with the Chalcedonian dyophysites (the ‘Byzantine Orthodox’), who held that each nature, although fully united with the other, was complete in itself. The first attempt at a compromise had proposed ‘two natures but one energy’ (the ‘monenergist’ position). When this formula failed to satisfy, the next proposal was ‘two natures or energies but one will’. The Sixth Ecumenical Council rejected both formulae, decreeing that since in the one person of Christ ‘each nature wills and does the things proper to it and that indivisibly and unconfusedly ... we confess two wills and two operations (*energeiai*), concurring most fitly in him for the salvation of the human race’.⁸¹

Palamas mentions the Sixth Ecumenical Council several times in his writings. In the first of his *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* (1343–1344), he insists that those who call the energies created are worse than the Monothelites. ‘For they think that Christ has only a created will, and only one energy, the created one, on the supposition that everything is created which is not divine essence, as a result of which, again, they even reduce the divine essence to a creature.’⁸² In the second of the same series of *Antirrhetics* Palamas develops this point, citing first a passage that he says he is quoting verbatim from the acts of the council:

Every nature is a source of energy and the natural wills are divided by the different energies. If there are two natures in Christ, how is each not the source of its own energy and the will which is appropriate to it, as being on the one hand a created (p.150) energy and will from the created nature, and an uncreated energy and will from the uncreated nature?⁸³

Based on this text, Palamas argues that to maintain that only the divine essence is uncreated is to accuse the Fathers of the council themselves of error, for they speak of an uncreated energy which belongs to the Son by virtue of his uncreated divine nature and indeed is caused by that nature. If Akindynos denies the uncreated *effect*, a denial entailed by his insistence that only the essence of God is uncreated, he thereby denies the uncreated *cause*, thus falling into one of two errors. Either he makes the Son a creature, because if the effect is created the cause must also be created, or he confuses the persons of the Trinity, because if the Son is not the source of uncreated energy and will, the only uncreated energy is the Son and the Spirit themselves, who are therefore not differentiated from the Father.

Palamas quotes the same passage again some ten years later in the second of his treatises, *Against Gregoras*.⁸⁴ This time he ignores the first of the consequences that he argues follow from denying an uncreated energy in Christ as well as an uncreated essence, namely, the reduction of the Son to a creature. Instead, perhaps because the argument had proved effective at the council of 1351, he dwells on the second consequence, namely, the confusion of the persons of the Trinity. Gregoras, he says, confuses the divine hypostases because he abolishes what distinguishes them, which is uncreated energy and will springing eternally from the essence within each hypostasis as from a cause. The position taken by Gregoras results in the Father becoming identical with the Son and the Spirit, because the Father causes them to spring forth in such a way that the Son and the Spirit are themselves the uncreated energy that springs from the divine essence.

Palamas’ ‘explication’ of his citation from the Sixth Ecumenical Council is disappointing. He does not advance our understanding of the text or draw out its implications for mystical theology. Instead, he resorts to the technique he frequently adopts in his disputations, that of *reductio ad absurdum*. The opinions of Akindynos and Gregoras, he argues, when set

against the teaching of the Sixth Ecumenical Council on two energies and two wills in Christ, result in ludicrous doctrinal error.

To return the level of mystical theology, it is perhaps not entirely coincidental that the outbreak of the hesychast controversy, which began with Palamas' first letters to Akindynos and Barlaam in 1336, came seven years after Pope John XXII's bull *In agro dominico* of 27 March 1329, which censured twenty-eight propositions drawn from the teaching of the Dominican provincial Meister Eckhart on the nature of the soul's union with God. Among the propositions specifically condemned as heretical are the tenth, that we are trans (p.151) formed totally into God in the same way as the Eucharistic bread is converted into the body of Christ,⁸⁵ and the twenty-seventh, that there is something in the soul, namely the intellect, which is uncreated and uncreatable.⁸⁶ Eckhart was a Master of Theology with experience of teaching in Paris. He belongs to an intellectualist theological tradition, and his speculative mystical theology is likewise intellectualist. Union with God is attained on the cognitive level. Drawing on a Platonist tradition going back to Augustine, he sees the highest part of the soul, the intellect, as akin to the divine, a 'divine spark' that through divine action is transformed and becomes identical with God himself:

When God is at work in the soul, everything in the soul which is contrary to his nature is purified and cast out in the heat of the flame. Truly! The soul enters God more truly than any food enters into us. We can go even further and say that the soul is transformed into God.⁸⁷

Eckhart made a sharp distinction between 'God' (*Gott*) and 'Godhead' (*Gotheit*). The essence of God is *intellegere*—the act of self-knowledge. The divine nature as *Gotheit* is beyond all intellection. Yet it is into this divine nature that we enter by virtue of the birth of God in the soul—into God as he is in himself.

A comparison between Eckhart and Palamas is instructive. Both speak of the personal experience of God. Both make a distinction within the divine being that exists alongside the distinction of the persons. But Eckhart is the more speculative thinker and goes a good deal further than Palamas. In Palamite terms, he would seem to teach participation not merely in the energies, but in the divine essence itself. Palamas' mystical theology was found by successive Constantinopolitan councils to be satisfactorily rooted in what we would now call dogmatic theology. John XXII, however, and his theological advisers in Avignon judged that on a number of points Eckhart parted company with the Church's dogma. The general consensus today is that, when Eckhart's own explanations and disclaimers are taken into account, he remained within the bounds of orthodoxy.⁸⁸ Palamas' reputation (at least in the West) has moved in the opposite direction. Yet in the fourteenth century, it was deemed by their respective ecclesiastical authorities that Eckhart's teaching was heretical, whereas that of Palamas was orthodox. Palamas may have regarded theology as (p.152) inferior to contemplation, but he was anxious when pressed to allow the latter to be judged by the former.

How are Theological Disputes to be Resolved?

The near-contemporary cases of Gregory Palamas and Meister Eckhart highlight the difference in the procedures followed in East and West for settling theological disputes. In Constantinople, neither the patriarch nor the emperor exercised the authority in doctrinal matters that in the West was vested in the pope. That is not to say that dogmatic authority in

the East was not top-down when the political situation facilitated it. But theoretically church and state worked in ‘symphony’ to promote the Orthodox faith, the emperor summoning the bishops on occasion, when a doctrine became a matter of dispute, to discover synodically the mind of the Church. How imperfect these respective systems could be in practice may be studied not only in the hesychast controversy but also in a parallel dispute that arose in the West over the nature of the beatific vision.⁸⁹

The second of the Avignon popes, John XXII (1316–1334), the pope who in 1329 had condemned the twenty-eight propositions of Meister Eckhart, himself came under criticism for maintaining the opinion in a series of sermons delivered between the feasts of All Saints 1331 and Epiphany 1332 (in his private capacity, he later claimed, as a theologian) that the beatific vision was not enjoyed by the saints immediately after death but was deferred until the Last Judgement. John XXII, who had been trained as a lawyer at Montpellier, was moved by the legal principle that a person could not be tried twice for the same offence. If definitive judgement was reserved to the eschaton, the saints could enjoy the vision of the humanity of Jesus after their death, as tradition held, but had to wait until the last day to enjoy the vision of his divine essence—the beatific vision proper. The scriptural basis for this was to be found in Revelation 6:9–11, where the martyrs under the altar are told to continue waiting until their number would be complete. Patristic support was sought in St Bernard and St Ambrose, who, appealing to 1 Corinthians 12:26, emphasized the solidarity of all the faithful until the Last Judgement.

Scholastic opinion was divided on the matter. A few, notably Franciscans of the University of Oxford, defended the papal line on deferred judgement, but (p.153) the majority of theologians, including most of the Paris faculty of theology, were opposed to it. The context of the debate was the papal struggle with the Franciscan spirituals (not to mention the heretical Beghards and Cathars) who claimed that perfection could be attained in this present life. Against this view, which threatened ecclesiastical discipline, the pope was anxious to push back the beatific vision to the Last Judgement. In his correspondence with the king of France, however, he maintained that this was a disputed opinion that he had opened up for discussion in his sermons but did not seek to impose on the Church.⁹⁰ As a result, the dispute became a bitter one, fought over by partisans on both sides in the lecture halls of the universities and even in broader assemblies.⁹¹ Not only did the dispute split the academic community, but it also threatened to divide the whole Church.⁹²

One of the leading advocates of the view opposing that of John XXII was the Master of the Sacred Palace, Cardinal Jacques Fournier, who at the end of 1334 succeeded John as the third of the Avignon popes, Benedict XII. Benedict lost no time in issuing an authoritative judgement on the matter. By the dogmatic constitution *Benedictus Deus* of 29 January 1336, he formally defined that even before the resurrection of their bodies the souls of all the saints, including those of the apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, the souls of all the baptized who have nothing to expiate upon death, and even the souls of children before the age of discretion who were to have been baptized but had died before baptism, by virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection ‘have seen and will see the divine essence by a vision that is intuitive and even face to face, not with the mediating interposition of any creature, but the divine essence showing itself to them nakedly, clearly and openly in an immediate manner’.⁹³ By this short and carefully worded document, the beatific vision was clearly and authoritatively defined as the unmediated experience upon death of the divine essence, thus bringing the controversy to an end.

The contrast with the way in which the parallel Eastern controversy over the vision of the light of Tabor was handled is striking. Whether the radiant light emanating from Christ at his transfiguration on Mount Tabor was created or uncreated was debated heatedly in the East, not as a separate question but as an integral part of the hesychast controversy. The first mention of the (p.154) Transfiguration is in the *Hagioritic Tome*, or *Tomos of the Holy Mountain in defence of the holy hesychasts*, drawn up in 1340 by Palamas and signed by the *protos*, *hegoumenoi*, and leading hesychasts of Mount Athos in response to the formal charges laid by Barlaam against Palamas in Constantinople earlier that year. The tome states: Whoever says that the light which shone about the disciples on Tabor was a phantasm and a symbol of such a kind that it comes into being and passes away, but possesses no genuine existence and is not beyond all understanding, is in clear opposition to the opinion of the saints.⁹⁴

The interpretation rejected by the Athonite assembly seems to have been the one presented by Barlaam in his lost work, *On light*.⁹⁵ Barlaam's position was condemned, and the Athonite reading of the Transfiguration confirmed, by the Synodal Tome of 1341 with the support of several extracts from Andrew of Crete's homily on the Transfiguration.⁹⁶

The synodal declaration, however, by no means ended the matter. Akindynos, maintaining correctly that even though Christ's divine nature and human nature are combined in a single hypostasis each nature nevertheless retains its own characteristics, was convinced that the light of Tabor belonged to Christ's human nature and was therefore created.⁹⁷ In his *Antirrhetics against Akindynos*, Palamas returns many times to this issue, arguing that the light of Tabor, as the glory of Christ's divinity shining through his humanity, was uncreated, and that to say otherwise was to be guilty of a Christological error worse than that of the Monothelites. What was at stake was not an abstruse doctrinal point, but the practical question of how human beings are able to attain the vision of God. Akindynos and Palamas both agreed (on the authority of Gregory of Nazianzus) that the essence of God was not in itself visible.⁹⁸ So what did the apostles see on Mount Tabor?

Palamas argues that what the apostles saw was the uncreated light of divinity and is convinced that he has reason, patristic testimony, and synodal authority on his side. On the rational level, he resorts to his favourite stratagem of *reductio ad absurdum*. According to Akindynos, even Moses only saw God by divine (p.155) condescension. *A fortiori* the three apostles cannot have seen God in a superior way to Moses or, for that matter, to Paul. The light of the Transfiguration must have become God's manifestation of himself 'by condescension' (θείας, φησὶ, γενομένης συγκαταβάσεως). Yet Akindynos also holds that the only way human beings can see God is analogically through his creatures. He therefore reduces the light of the Transfiguration to a creature while at the same time maintaining that in some obscure sense the light is also God 'by condescension'.⁹⁹ On the patristic level, Palamas marshals a great many testimonies against Akindynos, arguing that even if the light mentioned by the Fathers is symbolic, as Akindynos maintains, it is not an arbitrary symbol but one that actually conveys what it symbolizes.¹⁰⁰ On the disciplinary level, Palamas argues that although in his own mind Akindynos has circumvented the condemnation of 1341, the creaturely status of the divine light is entailed by the logic of his arguments, and so he stands condemned.¹⁰¹

Palamas offers his mature reflections on the light of the Transfiguration in two of his homilies and in his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*.¹⁰² Following Maximus the Confessor, he insists that the radiance seen by the apostles on Mount Tabor is evidence of a change not in Christ but in the beholders, 'who were transferred from flesh to spirit in that moment, by a

change in their sensory powers'.¹⁰³ As St John Chrysostom says, 'Christ opened up a little of his divinity'.¹⁰⁴ Those who make this light a perceptible created light are inspired simply by Greek philosophy.¹⁰⁵ They blaspheme against the economy of the flesh, dragging the divinity of God down to the level of a creature.¹⁰⁶ The light revealed what Christ already was in a hidden way, and those who saw it had their eyes opened as if healed of blindness.¹⁰⁷ For the light is the beauty and radiance of the divine nature. It purifies our minds and sustains us, conforming us to the likeness of the glory of the Lord, whose face shone on the mountain like the sun. That glory is not the essence of God, because Christ in the gospels (**p.156**) teaches us that this glory is common to the Father and the angels.¹⁰⁸ Filled with this light, we shall share Christ's eternity.¹⁰⁹

This was the teaching on the vision of the divine light endorsed by the councils of 1347 and 1351. The first of these two councils was held in February 1347, only a week or two after John Kantakouzenos' entry into Constantinople as victor in the civil war that had devastated the empire for the previous six years. The synodal tome issued shortly after the council describes how, in the course of examining a dossier of texts by the patriarch John Kalekas, a number of statements in Akindynos' own hand were found. These claimed that the light seen by the apostles on Tabor was created on the grounds that a divine energy cannot be seen with created eyes, nor can it be something different from the essence of God.¹¹⁰ These statements were condemned and Akindynos was deposed from the priesthood and excommunicated.

The second of the two councils, held at the imperial residence, the Blachernae palace, in May–June 1351, was forced on Kantakouzenos by the continuing absence of unanimity. The opponents of Palamas, now led by two metropolitans, Matthew of Ephesus and Joseph of Ganos, were allowed full freedom to make their case. The nature of the light of Tabor, although not the only issue debated at the council, occupied a major part of the first session, which was held on 28 May 1351 with the full participation of the anti-Palamites. The synodal tome, drawn up by Philotheos of Herakleia and signed on 15 August by the emperor John Kantakouzenos and the metropolitans who accepted Palamas' orthodoxy, summarizes the debate as follows:

Indeed, when the dissenters from the Church were asked by the metropolitan of Thessalonica what opinion they held on the most divine light, the one in what he said and what he read out in the hearing of all showed himself in every respect to be firmly in accord with the mind of the theologians, whereas the others in what they said and in what they were found to have written were convicted of dividing the one divinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit into two, into what is created and what is uncreated, on the one hand by saying that the essence of God is uncreated divinity deprived of all divine power and energy, and on the other by rejecting and denying any power and energy in God—in a word, his omnipotence—and reducing God to a creature, and saying that he is two divinities, that he is both uncreated and created, both superior and inferior in reality, inasmuch as they sometimes said that the light of divinity that shone on Tabor was the essence of God, and sometimes that it was an apparition, a veil, an image, and a creature, with the result that in their view the same thing is both a creature and the essence of God.¹¹¹

(p.157) At the end of the council, the metropolitans Matthew of Ephesus and Joseph of Ganos, together with the philosopher Nikephoros Gregoras and several lesser anti-Palamites, were convicted of heresy but were not subjected to any penalties more severe than house-arrest.

The council of 1351 was an authoritative assembly and its tome acquired the full weight of law, so why did the synodal tome it issued not prove as decisive in the East as the papal bull of 1336 had done in the West? Several reasons may be suggested. First, the council was seen by the anti-Palamites as a *Kantakouzene* council, not only convoked by John VI Kantakouzenos but also managed by him to produce a predetermined result. John VI's co-emperor, John V Palaiologos, took no part in the proceedings and did not sign the tome until February or March 1352.¹¹² Secondly, the forced abdication of John VI in 1354, with the subsequent release of those who had been detained in 1351, further weakened the authority of the council. Thirdly, the relatively minor punishments meted out to the anti-Palamites did nothing to inhibit them from continuing their campaign against Palamas. And lastly, the translation of Western Scholastic texts by the Kydones brothers, beginning with Demetrios Kydones' translation of Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* in 1354, put new wind in the sails of the anti-Palamites in the decade before the final definitive Palamite council of 1368 which glorified Gregory Palamas among the saints.

One of the minor anti-Palamites condemned in 1351 was Theodore Dexios. Shortly after the council, Dexios addressed a formal appeal to John VI Kantakouzenos, complaining about the emperor's partiality, which is revealing about the way the proceedings were conducted.¹¹³ At the opening of the council the gospels were placed in the centre of the room and Kantakouzenos swore that he would be impartial. He would not, however, let the anti-Palamites sit next to him, and in his opening speech he uttered threats against them.¹¹⁴ Moreover, at the third session he told the anti-Palamites that the Church (that is, the Palamite bishops assembled at the council) regarded the accusation brought against Palamas as an accusation against the Church itself.¹¹⁵ At the fourth session, he allowed the pro-Palamite Synodal Tome of 1341 to be read but did not permit the reading of the anti-Palamite Tome of the patriarch Ignatios II of Antioch, which had been issued in 1344.¹¹⁶ Finally, he precluded any extended discussion of the central doctrinal issue of the council by asking (p.158) the anti-Palamites point-blank whether they believed the light of Tabor was created or not.¹¹⁷

Dexios argues that the topic of the light of Tabor should have been discussed fully because it had not previously been the subject of any conciliar judgement.¹¹⁸ His own views are set out in the draft of a treatise that, although incomplete, gives us a sufficiently clear idea of his somewhat unusual opinion.¹¹⁹ Some of the anti-Palamites, like Barlaam and Gregoras, interpreted the light of Tabor as a created symbol distinct from Christ's uncreated divinity. Others, like Akindynos, held that it was indeed the light of the incarnate Logos, but refused to agree with Palamas that it represented a different mode of divine being from that of the divine essence, preferring to leave the precise nature of the divine light a mystery. Dexios maintains that the light is not different from Christ. It reveals the divine Logos and can therefore not be a creature. Yet it is accessible to our intellect as an image of the Resurrection by virtue of the *communicatio idiomatum*. What was seen was the hypostasis of Christ in its *duality*, the uncreated becoming visible in Christ's created human flesh.¹²⁰

Another participant in the council of 1351 was Arsenios, metropolitan of Tyre, and later self-proclaimed patriarch of Antioch in succession to Ignatios. At the time of the council, he was *hegoumenos* of the Hodegoi monastery in Constantinople, a monastery of the patriarchate of Antioch, in which capacity he attended all but the last of the council sessions. In 1367 as 'patriarch of Antioch' he produced a Tome against the Palamites, which supplements the one-sided account of the proceedings of 1351 which we find in the officially promulgated synodal tome.¹²¹ On the light of Tabor, Arsenios quotes several paragraphs from John Damascene's homily on the Transfiguration that were cited at the council of 1351,

giving a fuller account of the discussion provoked by them . The anti-Palamites maintained that a single uncreated divinity was revealed to the apostles ‘in a manner apprehensible by the intellect’ (νοητῶς), not ‘another divinity’ (i.e. an energy) as their opponents claimed.¹²² The correct interpretation of the Transfiguration was important because it affected the way deification (θέωσις) was understood and thus pertained to the doctrine of salvation. The fundamental question was how the Christian can participate in the divine.

(p.159) This question occupies the last third of Arsenios’ Tome. He gives a detailed account of the exchange that followed the direct question that the emperor put to the dissidents on whether the light which the apostles saw was created or uncreated.¹²³ The anti-Palamites declared boldly (μετὰ παρησίας) that they could not answer because it was not a simple case of either/or. The vision of the divine light should not be considered in isolation from other experiences of the divine, particularly in the Eucharist, for John Damascene says that those who partake of the body and blood of Christ become partakers of the divine nature.¹²⁴ We never experience Christ only as a created nature or only as an unhypostasized divinity. To separate the divine and the human in the Transfiguration as sharply as the Palamites do must be rejected, because it has unacceptable implications for the Eucharist.

The emperor’s question, demanding a straight yes or no answer as to whether the light of Tabor was created or uncreated, was evidently perceived by the Palamites as reaching the heart of the matter. The same question was put to Prochoros Kydones by the patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos at Kydones’ trial in 1368.¹²⁵ Like the anti-Palamites in 1351, Kydones refused to reply. When Philotheos accused him of maintaining that the light of Tabor was both created and uncreated, he remained silent. Perhaps he felt he had argued with sufficient clarity in his writings that he regarded the light of Tabor as both a cause and an effect: inasmuch as it was the cause of what was seen, it was uncreated; inasmuch as what was seen was the result of movement in the contingent order, it was created. In any case, he had developed his thinking as a result of his study of Western scholastic authors—he had translated Aquinas’ *De mundi aeternitate* and eighty-two articles from his *Summa theologiae*—and knew by this stage of the trial that a sympathetic hearing was impossible.

The Western controversy concerning the beatific vision was on whether the righteous would see the essence of God immediately after death or only after the Last Judgement. It was settled relatively quickly by Pope Benedict XII because, despite his difficulties with the Franciscan spirituals and the German emperor, he commanded sufficient authority to impose his decision as a formal papal judgement. The Eastern controversy differed in several important respects. First, it concerned the attainment of the beatific vision in this life as well as in the next. Secondly, in view of the patristic tradition that the essence of God is not accessible to human eyes,¹²⁶ it also concerned the precise nature of what it **(p.160)** is that is seen: the divine essence, or a divine energy distinct from the essence, or a created effect of the divine essence. Thirdly, the decision-making process in doctrinal matters had been rendered dysfunctional in the East by the civil war of 1341–1347 and by its outcome, the sharing of power between John VI Kantakouzenos and John V Palaiologos. Palamas was careful formally to remain neutral in the civil war, but he was clearly sympathetic to Kantakouzenos, and by the end of the war it was no secret that Kantakouzenos himself was a convinced Palamite. The councils of 1347 and 1351 were widely regarded as partisan assemblies by the opponents of Palamas, and therefore as not binding on them. Moreover, after the abdication of Kantakouzenos in 1354, the political will was lacking during John V’s long reign as sole emperor to impose the decisions of the Palamite councils by force. The matter therefore dragged on until the canonization of Palamas, which was carefully prepared for by Philotheos with the documentation of the candidate’s post-mortem miracles. Even

then, anti-Palamites could continue to express their opinions freely until a hard Palamite line, forbidding all dissent, was finally imposed by the patriarch Antony IV during his second patriarchate (1390–1397).

Conclusion

Theology and philosophy were more fully separated in the East than in the West. Barlaam, although a Greek monk, is atypical in refusing to make the sharp contrast between the ‘outer wisdom’ and the ‘inner wisdom’ that was characteristic of Eastern theologians. But Barlaam is not a product of the Western schools either. Westerners in the fourteenth century generally pursued theological studies in a university setting once they had completed a rigorous course of philosophical studies with a view to gaining a competence in logic. Easterners were not trained in syllogistic as a preparation for theological studies. Theology in the East was done in a monastic environment. If educated men entered the monastic life, they often brought with them a knowledge of the tradition of Greek philosophy and a competence in the application of Aristotelian techniques of logical analysis. But the emphasis in the monasteries was on the encounter with God in prayer, not, as in the universities of Oxford and Paris, on mastering theology as a science.

Palamas makes a distinction between ‘theology’ as talking about God and ‘contemplation’ as experiencing God. Theology was therefore greatly inferior to contemplation. Yet Palamas was not party to the fourteenth-century ‘anti-logical movement’. He retained a taste for syllogistic to the end of his life, relying on it particularly in many of his letters and in his multi-volume antirrhetics against Akindynos and Gregoras. Indeed, his reliance on logic is one reason why it is difficult to speak of ‘development’ in Palamas’ theological discussions. (p.161) He constantly uses syllogistic as a rhetorical device to demolish the arguments of his opponents by exposing their incoherence. As a result, his own conclusions are often largely negative, as he rejects this or that interpretation. It is not in his antirrhetic works but in his theological treatises of the early 1340s and in his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* of 1349/50 that we can best discern what he contributed to the development of the Christian understanding of divine–human communion.

‘Development’, of course, did not mean the elaboration of new doctrines. It meant the ‘explication’ of what was already implicit in the faith transmitted by the apostles.¹²⁷ Palamas attempts to make explicit the distinction between the essence and the energy of God, which he sees as implicit in the Trinitarian theology of the Cappadocian Fathers and in the Sixth Ecumenical Council’s definition of Christ’s divine and human energies. He also attempts to draw out the implications of the apostles’ experience of the Transfiguration. This had not previously been the subject of conciliar definition, as was pointed out at the time, and so offered scope for the exploration of fresh insights. Accordingly, the Transfiguration was an important topic and was discussed in each of the Palamite councils.

The Constantinopolitan councils of 1341, 1347, and 1351, however, failed initially to establish themselves as authoritative. The anti-Palamites did not consider themselves bound by the Synodal Tome of 1341, because of the four Eastern patriarchs only the patriarch of Constantinople had appended his signature,¹²⁸ or by the synodal tomes of 1347 and 1351, because they were seen as the products of partisan councils whose results had been predetermined by the emperor John VI Kantakouzenos. Retrospectively, however, the council of 1351 did come to be regarded as authoritative and its anathemas were eventually added to

the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*, the list of proscribed heretics read liturgically on the first Sunday of Lent. Unlike the Western definition by Benedict XII of the beatific vision, the Eastern pronouncement on the orthodoxy of the more complex issues raised by Palamite theology was drawn out over several decades. By the end of the century, unanimity was achieved, but only at the cost of driving out the remaining dissidents into the arms of the Latin Church.

(p.162) Palamas seems to have had no knowledge of contemporary Western theology. He was not anti-Western, however, and had studied and made use of the Greek translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate* which had been made available by Maximos Planoudes towards the end of the previous century. After 1354, the date of Demetrios Kydones' translation of Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles*, Thomist thought made a strong impression on several Greek theologians, both Palamite and anti-Palamite. This led to some interesting new speculations, especially on the nature of the light of Mount Tabor. Palamas himself died before an encounter with Aquinas became possible for him. The legacy he bequeathed to his successors, however, proved to be a fertile basis for further reflection.

Notes:

(¹) J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longmans, 1960), 27. For a stimulating discussion of the difference between the Orthodox and the modern Western sense of doctrinal development, see Andrew Louth, 'Is Development of Doctrine a Valid Category for Orthodox Theology?', in Valerie Hotchkiss and Patrick Henry (eds), *Orthodoxy and Western Culture: A Collection of Essays Honoring Jaroslav Pelikan on His Eightieth Birthday* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005), 45–63.

(²) Cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 31, 26 (Moreschini, 770).

(³) Palamas himself gives the example of the non-biblical word ὁμοούσιον (consubstantial) adopted by the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council (Nicaea I) in their creedal summary of the Christian faith; see Palamas, *Letter to Dionysios* 15 (Christou II, 494; Perrella III, 930).

(⁴) On Buridan and his 'vision of the philosophical enterprise', see Jack Zupko, *John Buridan: Portrait of a Fourteenth-Century Arts Master* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).

(⁵) Zupko, *John Buridan*, xvii.

(⁶) Buridan, *In Metaphysicen Aristotelis Quaestiones argutissimae* I. 2: 4ra–rb; trans. Zupko, *John Buridan*, 141. See also Zupko's discussion, *John Buridan*, 139–45.

(⁷) Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 3.

(⁸) On Scotus' view of demonstration, see Cross, *Duns Scotus*, 127–30. Barlaam of Calabria adheres to the same principle with regard to the validity of demonstrative arguments.

(⁹) For a detailed analysis of the kind of textbook used for the study of logic, see Jonathan Barnes, 'Syllogistic in the anon Heiberg', in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 97–137.

(¹⁰) Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 366.

(¹¹) Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 27, 8 (Moreschini, 652).

(¹²) Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 27, 10, alluding to 1 Corinthians 13:12 (Moreschini, 654).

- ⁽¹³⁾ Theoleptos of Philadelphia, *MD* 2, 42; ed. and trans. Robert E. Sinkewicz, *Theoleptos of Philadelphieia, The Monastic Discourses* (Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992), 143. The *Monastic Discourses* were delivered to the community of nuns founded in Constantinople by Nikephoros Choumnos for his daughter, Eirene-Eulogia, who was installed as abbess.
- ⁽¹⁴⁾ Theoleptos of Philadelphia, *MD* 23, 26 (Sinkewicz, *Theoleptos*, 365).
- ⁽¹⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 1, 2 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 11. 17–18; Perrella I, 276).
- ⁽¹⁶⁾ On this treatise, see Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 125–8.
- ⁽¹⁷⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 5 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 235. 7–12; Perrella I, 480).
- ⁽¹⁸⁾ Trizio, ‘Una è la verità’, 132–3. Barlaam’s use of *Syriani in Metaphysica commentaria* in his letters to Palamas has long been known; the six passages which he quotes or alludes to are listed in Fyrigos, *Dalla Controversia Palamitica*, 424–5.
- ⁽¹⁹⁾ Barlaam, *Ep.* III, 27, 258–9 (Fyrigos, *Dalla Controversia Palamitica*, 320). Palamas reproduces the quotation in his *Second Letter to Barlaam* 6 (Christou I, 264; Perrella III, 506).
- ⁽²⁰⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 5 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 237. 17–18; Perrella I, 482).
- ⁽²¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 237. 20–1; Perrella I, 482).
- ⁽²²⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 16 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 257. 21–2; Perrella I, 500), cf. *Triads* I, 1, 8 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 25–7; Perrella I, 288–90), with reference to Basil of Caesarea’s spiritual exegesis of Exodus 12:36.
- ⁽²³⁾ Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 45 (Christou I, 251; Perrella I, 482).
- ⁽²⁴⁾ Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 46–7 (Christou I, 252–3; Perrella III, 484–6).
- ⁽²⁵⁾ Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 54 (Christou I, 256; Perrella III, 494).
- ⁽²⁶⁾ A saying of Xenophon of Colophon is quoted in the *Letter to the monk Dionysios* 1 (Christou II, 479; Perrella III, 906); cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 9, 2.
- ⁽²⁷⁾ On Porphyry: Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 7 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 241.9–11; Perrella I, 484); *First Letter to Barlaam* 46 (Christou I, 252; Perrella III, 484); *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* VII, 25 (Christou III, 479; Perrella II, 830–2). In the antirrhetic treatise against Akindynos (dating from 1344) Palamas has re-used material from his letter to Barlaam (autumn 1336). On Mauricius: Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 47 (Christou I, 252–3; Perrella III, 486); *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* VII, 25 (Christou III, 479; Perrella II, 830–2). Again in the antirrhetic treatise Palamas has drawn on his letter to Barlaam.
- ⁽²⁸⁾ For example, in the *Letter to the monk Dionysios* 1 (Christou II, 479–80; Perrella III, 906), and in *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* 25 (Sinkewicz, 108).
- ⁽²⁹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 1, 7 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 241. 6–14; Perrella I, 484).
- ⁽³⁰⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 1, 8 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 25–7; Perrella I, 288–90); *Triads* I, 1, 23 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 65. 1–5; Perrella I, 326–8).
- ⁽³¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 1, 19 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 55. 20–7; Perrella I, 316–18).
- ⁽³²⁾ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 28, 4, quoting Plato, *Tim.* 28c (Moreschini, 658); cf. Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 55 (Christou I, 257; Perrella III, 494).

(³³) Marie-Odile Boulnois, ‘Païens et Chrétiens en concurrence: l’instrumentalisation de la philosophie dans les controverses d’Origène contre Celse et de Cyrille d’Alexandrie contre Julien’, in Christoph Riedweg (ed.), *Philosophia in der Konkurrenz von Schulen, Wissenschaften und Religionen* (Boston and Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 217–56.

(³⁴) Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 7, 42 (Henry Chadwick, *Origen contra Celsum* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965], 430); Boulnois, ‘Païens et Chrétiens’, 245.

(³⁵) Cyril, *Cont. Jul.* 1, 20 (PG 76, 525CD).

(³⁶) Cyril, *Cont. Jul.* 1, 42 (PG 76, 548D–549A); Boulnois, ‘Païens et Chrétiens’, 246.

(³⁷) We know that Gregory of Nazianzus had studied Origen’s *Contra Celsum* because he included sections from it in the *Philocalia* he compiled with Basil of Caesarea.

(³⁸) Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 55 (Christou I, 257; Perrella III, 494); but cf. Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 25 (Christou I, 276; Perrella III, 530), where the saying is quoted accurately.

(³⁹) Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 54 (Christou I, 256; Perrella III, 494); *Second Letter to Barlaam* 6 (Christou I, 264; Perrella III, 506). The debate on the use of Aristotelian logic has been analysed by Robert Sinkewicz in two articles that are fundamental for understanding the beginning of the hesychast controversy: R. E. Sinkewicz, ‘A New Interpretation for the First Episode in the Controversy between Barlaam the Calabrian and Gregory Palamas’, *JTS* 31 (1980), 488–500; R. E. Sinkewicz, ‘The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian’, *Mediaeval Studies* 44 (1982), 181–242.

(⁴⁰) Witness the case of John Italos in the eleventh century and, even more strikingly, of George Gemistos Plethon in the fifteenth.

(⁴¹) 1 Corinthians 1:20–1. Palamas comments on the two wisdoms at some length in *Triads* II, 1, 19–20 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 265–7; Perrella I, 506–10).

(⁴²) Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 33 (Christou I, 244; Perrella III, 468).

(⁴³) Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 33 (Christou I, 244; Perrella III, 468): ἐπαφὴ γὰρ αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν οὔτε ἐπιστήμη†. Palamas appears here to be negating a statement of Plotinus: ἔστι μὲν γὰρ ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ εἴτε γνῶσις εἴτε ἐπαφή μέγιστον (Ennead VI, 7, 36. 4–5).

(⁴⁴) Sinkewicz, ‘The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God’, 242.

(⁴⁵) Barlaam, *To Ignatios the Hesychast*, Ep. IV, 9 (Fyrigos, 376. 77).

(⁴⁶) Barlaam, *To David Dishypatos*, Ep. VIII, 5 (Fyrigos, 400. 31–4).

(⁴⁷) Plato, *Republic* VI, 505a.

(⁴⁸) In his *Contra Latinos* Barlaam refutes theses drawn from Thomas Aquinas, but he seems to have derived his knowledge of them from his interlocutors. In his letter to Nilos Triklinios he mentions Thomas explicitly (Ep. II, 15; Fyrigos, 286. 163), but not in his letters to Palamas. In his first letter to the latter, however, he does include one possible (unacknowledged) quotation from Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* (Ep. I, 23; Fyrigos, 212. 217–18). In Fyrigos’ opinion, Barlaam was the first Byzantine to have had a knowledge of Aquinas, probably in the original Latin (*Controversia palamitica*, 164). See also Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 54–5.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Barlaam, *To Neilos Triklinios, Ep. II*, 7 (Fyrigos, 278. 50–2); *To Gregory Palamas, Ep. III*, 2 (Fyrigos, 300. 20–1).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ The only sustained patristic reference is a catena of quotations from Gregory Nazianzus given anonymously as the testimony of ‘the theologians’: Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 28 (Fyrigos, 214. 260 ff.).

⁽⁵¹⁾ Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 89 (Fyrigos, 256. 768). It is interesting that in their correspondence it is Barlaam, not Palamas, who first raises the testimony of Dionysius. (I drop the ‘Pseudo-’ because, like Alexander Golitzin, I reject the implication that Dionysius is an impostor. On why the author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* adopted his pseudonym, see Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 1–15; cf. Charles M. Stang, ‘Dionysius, Paul and the Significance of the Pseudonym’, in Coakley and Stang, *Re-Thinking Dionysius the Areopagite*, 11–25.)

⁽⁵²⁾ Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 89 (Fyrigos, 256. 768–9); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names XIII*, 3, 980D–981A (Suchla, 229).

⁽⁵³⁾ Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 90 (Fyrigos, 256. 771–2); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names XIII*, 3, 980C (Suchla, 228–9): there is nothing that is not in the One as the cause of all things.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 91 (Fyrigos, 258. 784–9).

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Barlaam, *Ep. I*, 92 (Fyrigos, 258. 790–4).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 23–9 (Christou I, 273–7; Perrella III, 526–34).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 24 (Christou I, 274; Perrella III, 528); Romans 1:20.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 23 (Christou I, 273; Perrella III, 526); Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 28. 5.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 25 (Christou I, 275; Perrella III, 530).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Palamas, *Second Letter to Barlaam* 26 (Christou I, 275; Perrella III, 530).

⁽⁶¹⁾ Treatise 3, 21–4 of the first of Akindynos’ two refutations of the *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite*; critical ed. by J. Nadal Cañellas, *Gregorii Acindyni refutationes duae operis Gregorii Palamae cui titulus Dialogus inter Orthodoxam et Barlaamitam* (CCSG 31) (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995); French translation by J. Nadal Cañellas, *La résistance d’Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas*, vol. 1 (Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense. Études et documents 50) (Louvain: Peeters, 2006).

⁽⁶²⁾ On Akindynos’ handling of his patristic sources in general, see J. Nadal, ‘La critique par Akindynos de l’*herméneutique* patristique de Palamas’, *Istina* 19 (1974), 297–328; and on his use of Dionysius in particular, J. Nadal, ‘Denys l’Aréopagite dans les *Traité*s de Grégoire Akindynos’, in Ysabel de Andia (ed.), *Denys l’Aréopagite et sa postérité en Orient et en Occident* (Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1997), 533–62.

⁽⁶³⁾ Palamas, *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite* 47 (Christou II, 211; Perrella I, 1214).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Akindynos, *Refutation I*, 3, 21 (Nadal, *Résistance I*, 218), citing *Divine Names XIII*, 3, 980C (Suchla 228. 17–18).

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Akindynos, *Refutation I*, 3, 23 (Nadal, *Résistance I*, 222).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Dionysius, *Divine Names I*, 4, 592B (Suchla 113. 9–12).

- (⁶⁷) Dionysius, *Divine Names* XIII, 3, 981B (Suchla 230. 5).
- (⁶⁸) Akindynos, *Antirrhetics against Palamas* II, Codex Mon. gr. 223, fol. 98r (unedited); trans. Nadal, 'La critique par Akindynos', 310.
- (⁶⁹) The expression is Alexander Golitzin's, from *Mystagogy*, 73. I find Golitzin's discussion of the One and the Many in Dionysius' theology (*Mystagogy*, 59–79) entirely convincing.
- (⁷⁰) Meyendorff's contention that Palamas has submitted Dionysius to a 'Christological corrective' is no longer tenable. See Alexander Golitzin, 'Dionysius the Areopagite in the Works of Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a "Christological Corrective" and Related Matters', *SVTQ* 46:2 (2002), 163–90.
- (⁷¹) Dionysii Petavii, *De dogmatibus theologicis*, vols 1–3 (Paris: Sébastien Cramoisy, 1644).
- (⁷²) On the word 'mystery' in the Christian tradition, see Louis Bouyer, *The Christian Mystery: From Pagan Myth to Christian Mysticism*, trans. Illtyd Trethowan (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990).
- (⁷³) Bouyer, *Christian Mystery*, 210–16.
- (⁷⁴) Gregory of Nyssa, *Great Catechetical Oration* 3 (ed. J. H. Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903], 15. 10–12).
- (⁷⁵) Bouyer, *Christian Mystery*, 224.
- (⁷⁶) Maximus the Confessor, *Second Century on Love* 6 (trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, *The Philokalia*, vol 2, 66).
- (⁷⁷) Palamas *Triads* I, 3, 42 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 201. 19–23; Perrella I, 450).
- (⁷⁸) Syméon le Nouveau Theologien, *Traité théologiques et éthiques* 9 (ed. J. Darrouzès, SC 129, 220. 23–31); trans. A. Golitzin, *St Symeon the New Theologian, On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses*, vol. 2, 113.
- (⁷⁹) Palamas *Triads* I, 3, 42 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 203. 16–25; Perrella I, 452).
- (⁸⁰) Synodal Tome of 1351, § 6 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 378. 7).
- (⁸¹) Henry R. Percival (ed.), *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church* (NPNF, 2nd series, vol. 12), 346.
- (⁸²) Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* I, vii, 25 (Christou III, 58; Perrella II, 38).
- (⁸³) Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* II, xi, 38 (Christou III, 112; Perrella II, 142). The passage quoted by Palamas has not been identified.
- (⁸⁴) Palamas, *Against Gregoras* II, 72 (Christou IV, 314–15; Perrella II, 1082).
- (⁸⁵) Proposition 10: Nos transformamur totaliter in Deum et convertimur in eum, simili modo sicut in sacramento panis convertitur in corpus Christi: sic ego convertor in eum, quod ipse me operatur suum esse unum, non simile; per viventem Deum verum est quod ibi nulla est distinctio (*DTC* 4, 2063).
- (⁸⁶) Proposition 27: Aliquid est in anima quod est increatum et increabile; si tota anima esset talis, esset increata et increabilis, et hoc est intellectus (*DTC* 4, 2064).

⁽⁸⁷⁾ From Meister Eckhart's German sermons (*Deutsche Werke*, 1936, vol. 1, 336) quoted and translated by Oliver Davies, *God Within: The Mystical Tradition of Northern Europe*, 2nd ed. (New York: New City Press, 2006), 49.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ See the excellent discussion in Davies, *God Within*, 30–72.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ On this dispute, see the published thesis by Christian Trottman, *La Vision Béatifique: Des disputes scolastiques à sa définition par Benoît XII* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1995); Trottman's findings are usefully summarised in Christian Trottman and Arnaud Dumouch, *Benoît XII: La Vision béatifique* (Paris: Editions Docteur angélique, 2009). The following paragraphs depend on Trottman.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ John XXII, Letter to Philip VI of 18 November 1333, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1891), n. 978, 426–7.

⁽⁹¹⁾ On 19 December 1333, Philip VI called an assembly at Vincennes at which the issue of the Beatific Vision was debated in his presence in the vernacular.

⁽⁹²⁾ Philip VI of France was sympathetic to the papal opinion, but in Naples Robert of Anjou wrote against it, and in Munich the emperor Louis IV the Bavarian gave his support to William of Ockham and other theologians opposed to the pope.

⁽⁹³⁾ '... ac post Domini nostri Jesu Christi passionem et mortem viderunt et vident divinam essentiam visione intuitiva et etiam faciali, nulla mediante creatura in ratione objecti visi se habente, sed divina essentia immediate se nude, clare et aperte eis ostendente ...' Latin text with French translation in X. Le Bachelet, 'Benoît XII', *DTC* 2 (1905), 653–704, at 658.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ *Tomos of the Holy Mountain* 4 (Christou II, 572–3; Perrella II, 1256; Eng. trans. Sinkewicz, 'Gregory Palamas', 185–6).

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Fyrigos, *Controversia palamitica*, 139.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 358–9, §§ 14–24. The extracts from Andrew of Crete's homily may be found in English translation in Brian Daley, *Light on the Mountain: Greek Patristic and Byzantine Homilies on the Transfiguration of the Lord* (Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2013), 181–5.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 62. 46–54 (Hero, 252). Hero dates Letter 62 to 1346, but there is no evidence that Akindynos ever modified his views.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* V, ii, 4 (Christou III, 289; Perrella II, 478). In the passage cited by Palamas, Akindynos quotes Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letter 101 to Cledonius*, PG 37, 181A.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* V, ii, 5 (Christou III, 291; Perrella II, 482).

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* IV, v, 6–9 (Christou III, 291–4; Perrella II, 394–400).

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* V, iv, 6 (Christou III 291; Perrella II, 482).

⁽¹⁰²⁾ The light of Tabor is the topic of *Homilies* 34 and 35 for the vigil and feast of the Transfiguration, which cannot be dated precisely but must belong to Palamas' years as metropolitan of Thessalonica (1347–1357), and also of chapters 146 to 150 of *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, dated by Sinkewicz to 1349/50. The Greek text of the two homilies (not reproduced by Christou or Perrella) is in PG 151, 424–49; Eng. trans.,

Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 355–78. The Greek text of chapters 146 to 150 is edited with an Eng. trans. in Sinkewicz, 250–7.

(¹⁰³) Palamas, *Homily* 34, 8 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 360); cf. Maximus, *Ambigua to John* 7 (PG 91, 1125).

(¹⁰⁴) Palamas, *Homily* 34, 10 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 361); cf. John Chrysostom, *Homily after the Departure of Eutropius the Eunuch* (PG 52, 404).

(¹⁰⁵) Palamas, *Homily* 34, 12 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 363).

(¹⁰⁶) Palamas, *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, §148 (Sinkewicz, 255; Perrella III, 162).

(¹⁰⁷) Palamas, *Homily* 34, 13 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 363).

(¹⁰⁸) Palamas, *Homily* 35, 14 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 375); cf. Luke 9:26.

(¹⁰⁹) Palamas, *Homily* 35, 18 (Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 378).

(¹¹⁰) Synodal Tome of 1347 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 372).

(¹¹¹) Synodal Tome of 1351, § 10 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 380).

(¹¹²) Meyendorff, *Introduction*, 149 (*Study*, 99). He was in Thessaloniki at the time, dealing with the aftermath of the Zealot revolt.

(¹¹³) Theodore Dexios, *Appellatio adversus Iohannem Cantacuzenum*, in Ioannis D. Polemis (ed.), *Theodori Dexii Opera Omnia*, CCSG 55 (Turnout: Brepols, 2003), 1 ff.; English summary, lxxxii–cxiv. In *Appellatio* 37, Dexios makes it clear that he was writing before the publication of the Synodal Tome in 1352. The long Introduction by Polemis is an important contribution to our historical understanding of the council.

(¹¹⁴) Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, xxxii–xxxiii. The threats were in the form of a passage quoted from Demosthenes’ third *Philippic*.

(¹¹⁵) Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, xxxiv.

(¹¹⁶) Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, xxxvi.

(¹¹⁷) Dexios, *Appellatio* 20; English summary, Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, xc.

(¹¹⁸) Dexios, *Appellatio* 16; English summary, Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, lxxxviii.

(¹¹⁹) Dexios, *Tractatus brevis de Christo ipso splendente in Transfiguratione* (Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, 227–41; English summary, cxx–cxxii).

(¹²⁰) Dexios, *Tractatus* 7 (Polemis, *Dexii Opera*, 240–1. 27–36).

(¹²¹) Published by Ioannis D. Polemis, ‘Arsenius of Tyros and his Tome against the Palamites’, *JÖB* 43 (1993), 241–81. Arsenios, for example, gives the full text of the anti-Palamite confession of faith (265. 349–71) of which we only have the final sentence in the tome of 1351 (Polemis, ‘Arsenius’, 280, comment on lines 347–74).

(¹²²) Polemis, ‘Arsenius’, 266. 402–5.

(¹²³) Polemis, ‘Arsenius’, 268. 471–4.

(¹²⁴) Polemis, ‘Arsenius’, 270. 519–24, quoting John Damascene, *Against the Iconoclasts* 3, 26, who is himself quoting 2 Peter 1:4.

(¹²⁵) Synodal Tome of 1368, Antonio Rigo (ed.), ‘Il Tomo sinodale del 1368’, 681–6 (PG 151, 709D–710A), in Rigo, *Gregorio Palamas e oltre*, 124; cf. Norman Russell, ‘Prochoros Cydones and the fourteenth-century understanding of Orthodoxy’, in Louth and Casiday, *Byzantine Orthodoxies*, 84.

(¹²⁶) Cf. (Ps-) Athanasius of Alexandria, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum ducem* 28 (PG 28, 616A): οὐ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἔβλεπον οἱ ἅγιοι ἀλλὰ τὴν δόξαν ¶ cited by Palamas, *Apologia* 34 (Christou II, 120; Perrella I, 1032).

(¹²⁷) Basil the Great had already expressed this principle with the use of the analogy of the growth of a plant. Speaking of the faith transmitted to him in his childhood by his mother and grandmother, he declares: ‘I did not change from one opinion to another with the maturity of reason, but I perfected the principles handed down to me by them. For just as the seed, in developing, becomes larger instead of small, but is the same in itself, not changing in kind but being perfected in development (ἀλλὰ κατ’ αὐξησιν τελειούμενον), so I consider that also in me the same doctrine has been developed through progress (διὰ τῆς προκοπῆς ηὐξῆσθαι), and what is now mine has not taken the place of what existed in the beginning’ (Basil, *Letter 223 to Against Eustathius*, trans. Deferrari, *Letters*, iii, 299). Cf. Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 122–3. Palamas, however, avoids the language of ‘growth’ (αὐξησις), preferring that of ‘unfolding’ (ἀνάπτυξις).

(¹²⁸) The patriarch John Kalekas—and even he ignores the second council of July 1341, which had condemned Akindynos, not mentioning it in the Synodal Tome of 1341.

How is a participatory understanding of the divine mystery to be attained?

For Palamas, to know God experientially is to share in him, to have (on some level appropriate to created existence) a community of being with him. We are not restricted to an intellectual or inductive knowledge of God, such as may be acquired by inference from the world around us. According to Palamas, we are able to know God in a much more direct way by ‘participating’ in him. The meaning of participation, however, is not self-evident. The word itself (μέθεξις or μετουσίᾳ) is of Platonic origin and in Plato signifies the relationship of a particular to a transcendent Form or Idea.¹ The particular instantiates the universal. From the Platonic perspective, if we say that we participate in God, we mean we are instantiating him in the sense that we are exhibiting his attributes, or rather, some of them. Participation also implies duality, not identity, for there are necessarily two terms: the participant and the participated. In the case of a human being and God, these two terms are not commensurate. The one is transcendent, the other belongs to the finite sensible world. So how precisely are they related?

The next question concerns the nature of the participated term. To what in the divine can a human being be related? Is there a distinction between the transcendent form of God and his immanent character? There is a long tradition on this question, with roots going back again to Plato. In the Western version, God’s utter simplicity did not admit of any real distinctions (except on the level of hypostases or persons), even if our statements about God introduce a conceptual plurality. In the East a distinction was made, as Eric Perl has put it, between the ‘different modes in which reality may be given to cognition’.² God as the transcendent reality and determining cause is present and manifested in the determined effect. What is known in the effect is not a different reality from the cause; it is the appearance, the ‘image’, of the same reality. This (p.164) way of distinguishing between the transcendent and the immanent passes from the Neoplatonist philosophers via the Cappadocians, Dionysius the Areopagite, and Maximus the Confessor to Gregory Palamas, who presents it as a fully worked out distinction between the divine *ousia* and the divine *energeiai*. Is the distinction convincing?

Palamas’ opponents were persuaded that he was making an illegitimate distinction within the Godhead, an error compounded by his characterization of the *ousia* and the *energeiai* as higher and lower θεότητες, ‘divinities’. If Palamas had insisted on this, it would certainly have been an innovation, though not as startling as might seem. In the singular, the word is found in several Fathers in conjunction with terms denoting participation. What is new is the use of the word in the plural. Was Palamas stretching the limits of orthodoxy? He seems to have thought so because after first toying with the expression, he quietly dropped it.

These questions on the philosophical structures of Palamas’ thought need to be addressed before we go on to examine the soteriological content of his teaching.

What is the Nature of Participation?

According to Plato, all the sensible and intelligible beings of our transitory world exist in virtue of their dependence (by μέθεξις, or ‘participation’) on an unchanging transcendent reality which he calls the Idea or Form. Later Platonists introduced a dynamic element into

the notion of participation: the higher reality acts on the lower to effect the relation of participation. This principle is stated tersely by Proclus in the twenty-third proposition of his *Elements of Theology*: ‘All that is unparticipated produces out of itself the participated; and all participated substances are linked by upward tension to existences not participated.’³ There is a constant movement from unity to multiplicity and back again to unity, a perpetual procession and reversion (*exitus–reditus*), as the Good out of its bounty generates lower realities and the latter in their desire for the Good seek to return to their cause.⁴ This Platonic notion was Christianized by Dionysius, who understands the weaker sense of participation as God’s causal presence in all things and the stronger more dynamic sense as God’s self-manifestation by ‘going out of himself’ in erotic love for his creation.⁵

(p.165) Palamas’ first major discussion of participation is in the second treatise of the third *Triad*, where (addressing Barlaam) he poses the question: ‘Do you consider the powers proceeding from the hiddenness beyond all being that bestow deification or being or wisdom to be participating or participated?’⁶ The language is Dionysian, echoing a passage in *Divine Names* II, 7.⁷ Dionysius is saying there that anything belonging to the divine is known to us only in so far as it is revealed and then only by participation. God in himself is beyond being and beyond knowledge; if we call him life, or being, or light, it is because his deifying powers endow us with being, or life, or wisdom. Palamas invites Barlaam to agree that these *dynameis* or *energeiai* do not participate but are only participated. For if they were themselves participants, it would be necessary to find other powers in which they participated, and so we would be caught in the trap of infinite regression. Barlaam maintains that to assert that there are many different eternal and uncreated powers is to postulate a composite God.⁸ Palamas denies this. Like Dionysius, he distinguishes ontologically between what is imparticipable (ἀμέθεκτον), what is participable (μεθεκτόν), and what participates (μετέχον). God, as a reality that is not simply a being among others, or even a supreme being, but because he transcends them all and is therefore ‘beyond being’ is *eo ipso* imparticipable. As the transcendent cause of all things, he is nevertheless present in them in the manner in which a cause is present in its effect.⁹ He is present in them not as something other than himself yet in a mode accessible to the human mind, thus enabling human beings to participate in him by their wills. If there were no ontological distinction between God and his powers, the created world would participate in the transcendent ground itself of all reality and thus be indistinguishable from God.¹⁰ Between the one transcendent imparticipable reality and the many beings that participate in that reality, there are therefore numerous participable powers which nevertheless do not compromise the divine simplicity. Borrowing an analogy from Dionysius (based in turn by Dionysius on a passage in Plotinus), Palamas uses the image of superimposed circles to suggest how we might conceive of this. Although there are many circles, there is only one mathematical point, which is the centre.¹¹ Human beings participate in God through the divine powers or processions, which are thus, in Dionysius’ phrase, ‘unparticipatedly participated’ (ἀμεθέκτως μετεχόμενα).¹²

(p.166) Palamas’ next discussion of participation occurs in his *Apologia*, written immediately after the two synods of June and July 1341 in an attempt to persuade those who remained unconvinced that he was not preaching two Gods, one participable, the other imparticipable. In addressing a broader public, he does not focus narrowly on Dionysius, as he did in his debate with Barlaam, but draws on a wider range of patristic testimony, especially on texts from Basil of Caesarea, Maximus the Confessor and John Damascene. His language is accordingly less technical. He appeals to the biblical expressions ‘Lord of lords and God of gods’ (Deuteronomy 10:17; Daniel 2:47) and to the opening verse of Psalm 82 (81), ‘God stands in the assembly of the gods’, to show that ‘gods’ in this context are to be understood

not as independent entities but as participants in the lordship and divinity of the one God. An image that he uses to help his readers understand the nature of participation is the familiar one of iron heated in a fire. The red-hot iron takes on the characteristics of fire—participates in them—but remains iron in its nature; it does not become fire.¹³ Another important aspect of participation is that it distinguishes between the temporal and the eternal, the former being dependent upon and determined by the latter. In Maximus' words, 'Those things which began in time exist and are said to exist by participation in the things which did not begin in time.'¹⁴ The most important considerations of all, however, are Christological. The indwelling of Christ in the saints of which Paul (cf. Galatians 2:20) and the gospels (cf. John 14:23) speak implies a distinction between the unparticipated *ousia* of God and his participated grace, or deifying *energeia*, because Christ cannot be participated as an *ousia* without his being replicated hypostatically.¹⁵ Moreover, without the distinction between unparticipated and participated we would not be able to glorify the one Christ in two natures, wills, and energies, as defined by the Sixth Ecumenical Council.¹⁶

Palamas followed up his *Apologia* with three texts in quick succession, and these go over much the same ground in greater philosophical detail. These are his treatises *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite* (autumn of 1341), *On divine and deifying participation* (winter of 1341–1342), and *Theophanes* (early autumn 1342). What is new in them is Palamas' analysis of the different degrees of participation that may be postulated. His fundamental principle is the Procline and Dionysian axiom that all things participate in God: πάντα μετέχει (p.167) τοῦ θεοῦ.¹⁷ Not only do they participate in God, but also they participate in the *whole* of God.¹⁸ Stated baldly, without qualification, this might be taken to imply that the whole of reality is one undifferentiated divine mass, which is what Palamas claims his opponents' reasoning entails, because in their view what participates in the whole of God is not deprived of any of the divine attributes. The attributes or energies of God, however, must be distinguished from the divine substance. On the most fundamental level, all things participate in the whole of God as *being*. Animate things also participate in the whole of God as *life*, rational things additionally as *reason* or *intellect* (*logos*), and spiritual things, additionally again, as *spirit*. For participation is the manifestation of causality, and it can only be the whole of the cause, not part of it, that is manifested by the effects. Nevertheless, there are different degrees of participation in the cause. Even the demons participate in God in terms of being, life, and reason, although not in terms of spirit. The highest degree of participation is in God as *god*, through the imparting of divine grace. Again, this is a participation in the whole of God but not in the divine substance or essence, because that would blur the distinction between cause and effect, between creator and creature.¹⁹

The precise nature of the highest degree of participation is examined in the second and third of this trio of treatises with the support of numerous patristic testimonies. The key text is from Dionysius: 'The goal of hierarchy is the attaining of likeness to God and union with him so far as possible, which renders his disciples divine images, most clear and spotless mirrors, receptive of the thearchic ray of the principle of light.'²⁰ This confirms, in Palamas' view, that there are different degrees of participation in the one God, for the saints clearly participate in him more fully than all other created beings, which participate in him simply by virtue of sharing in existence, or life, or intellect. To live in the divine manner is to participate in the uncreated mode of existence of Christ and the Holy Spirit, which is not a natural attainment but is the result of a divine gift. There are thus two different senses in which creatures participate in God. One is passively and by necessity as created effects of a divine cause, in the way in which artefacts participate in , and so manifest, the craftsman who made

them; the other sense (participation properly, or κυρίως) is dynamically and volitionally as recipients of the supernatural gift of deification.²¹

(p.168) Palamas summarizes his mature thoughts on participation in two divisions of his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, chapters 85 to 95, which are based on his treatise *On divine and deifying participation*, and chapters 104 to 112, which reproduce several paragraphs verbatim of his dialogue *Theophanes*.²² In the first group of chapters, he draws on Dionysius' teaching on unity and distinction to distinguish between μετοχή (participation) and αὐτομετοχή (absolute participation).²³ Μετοχή refers to the different degrees of participation in God possible for created beings. Αὐτομετοχή refers to the relationship to God of his own processions and energies. Claiming to quote Dionysius, Palamas states that 'participation in absolute being in no way participates in anything'.²⁴ God as absolute being is not a 'thing', a discrete being. His processions and operations *ad extra* are not related to him as finite effects are related to their cause. Absolute existence can have no finite participants. Αὐτομετοχή therefore expresses the divine communication that without difference from, or diminution of, its source (on the analogy of the sun and its rays) bestows participation.

In the second group of chapters, Palamas prefaces his extracts from *Theophanes* with two chapters (104 and 105) on the mutual interpenetration of created and uncreated nature, maintaining in chapter 104 that 'God is in the all and the all is in God, the one sustaining, the other being sustained by him'.²⁵ This echoes a passage in the *Divine Names*, where Dionysius, quoting Colossians 1:17, explains how all things are dependent on God as their causal principle for their very existence.²⁶ Palamas emphasizes that it is the sustaining energy of God in which all things participate, not his substance, thus excluding any suggestion of pantheism. But it is not only God as their causal principle that beings manifest. God is also the goal of the existence of beings that have the capacity to become like God.

This more dynamic aspect of participation is the subject of Chapter 105. Alluding to 2 Peter 1:4 ('partakers of the divine nature'), Palamas says that 'God made us in order to make us partakers of his own divinity'.²⁷ This 'other way of participation' (τρόπον ἑτερον), as Palamas calls it, is a product of the human will's response to divine grace, an active participation in the divine energy. In **(p.169)** the dialogue *Theophanes* Palamas is not only the first theologian since Cyril of Alexandria to make extensive use of 2 Peter 1:4, but also the first absolutely to attempt an exegesis of the text.²⁸ His opponents appealed to it to prove that participation in God did not necessitate any distinction between essence and energy. Palamas argues that 'nature' in this context has two senses, an ontological one by which the divine nature, as essence, is imparticipable, and a dynamic one by which, as energy, it is participable. For this reason, he prefers to render the word 'nature' (φύσις) in 2 Peter 1:4 as 'divinity' (θεότης), in order to emphasize its participable sense. It is a participation that does not simply manifest divine causality but is actively bestowed by God on those who have pleased him.

What is the Distinction between *Ousia* and *Energieiai*?

In his classic work *Divine Substance*, Christopher Stead describes the concept of *ousia* as 'a piece of technical shorthand' which 'is really a complex of notions embodied in a changing tradition of philosophical thought'.²⁹ Stead identifies no fewer than twenty-eight meanings of *ousia*, the most important of which are the predicative ('what x is') and the classificatory ('the nature of x'). The word is generally translated in English as 'substance' or 'essence', but these expressions suggest that *ousia* is a 'thing'. Typically, however, '*ousia* indicates the

most permanent form of being and the ultimate principle of explanation'.³⁰ It refers to a reality of some kind that exists in its own right and is not simply a product of our imagination. When we come to speak of the *ousia* of God, is it possible to attain any conceptual clarity beyond this?

The most radical Christian attempt to define God's *ousia* was that of the fourth-century neo-Arian, Eunomius of Cyzicus. For Eunomius, the most fundamental characteristic of God was the fact that he was without cause, or 'unbegotten' (ἀγέννητος), 'for he was brought into being neither by his own action nor by that of any other, for each of these is equally impossible'.³¹ Moreover, God is said to be unbegotten not nominally by human invention (κατ' ἐπίνοιαν) but in reality (κατ' ἀλήθειαν).³² Unbegottenness is therefore God's *ousia* in the sense of its being 'what God is'. Once it is accepted that unbegottenness expresses the being of God, two consequences follow. First, as the Unbegotten, God's *ousia* is fully (p.170) accessible to the human mind. Secondly, he cannot share his *ousia* with another (the Son) by 'begetting', because unbegottenness *eo ipso* cannot be transmitted.

Both of these inferences shocked Eunomius' fellow Cappadocian, Basil of Caesarea. The second inference was more radically Arian than the teachings of Arius himself. It is the first, however, that concerns us here. To say that God could be comprehended by the human mind offended against the apophaticism that Basil had inherited from the Alexandrian Fathers, Clement and Origen (and Philo before them). Eunomius took it for granted that the logic of language corresponded to reality. If a name could be demonstrated not to be a human invention (an *epinoia*), it gave us direct access to an intelligible reality (an *ousia*) that existed independently of us.³³ This was a widely held opinion, but Eunomius went much further than most, claiming that we can know God as God knows himself, for to know him in any other way would be to know him only partially, κατ' ἐπίνοιαν, as a bundle of separate items of knowledge.³⁴ Basil responded with a two-fold strategy, arguing on the one hand that fully to comprehend the divine essence by our finite minds would render God similarly finite (we only know *that* God is, not *what* he is), and on the other that the term 'unbegottenness' indicates not the essence of God but only one of his many attributes.³⁵

Basil's discussions of the relation between the divine essence and its attributes in *Adversus Eunomium*, *De spiritu sancto*, and especially *Letter 234*, were carefully studied during the hesychast controversy. There is evidence, too, that copies of Eunomius' *Liber Apologeticus* were sometimes bound with Basil's refutation of Eunomius to help the reader follow Basil's arguments, with the result that Eunomius' arguments for distinguishing the essence from the energies also became known.³⁶ Palamas' earliest discussion of the essence-energies distinction is in the second treatise of the third of his *Triads* against Barlaam, which dates from the spring or summer of 1340. In this treatise, Palamas is concerned to defend himself against Barlaam's accusation that his teachings are simply a reprise of those of Theodore Blachernites, who was condemned as a Bogomil under the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180). In return, Palamas paints Barlaam as a Eunomian, because he will allow only the divine *ousia* to be 'without beginning' (ἀναρχος), which is equivalent to saying, like Eunomius, that the only divine substance is the 'unbegotten'.³⁷ This introduces an unacceptable division in the divine being. If the only unoriginate reality is the divine *ousia*, it follows that the divine powers or energies (holiness, goodness, (p.171) glory, providence, etc.) must have a beginning in time. But God is not a composite being. The whole of God is present in each of the divine energies, for each energy manifests him in his entirety. Yet he transcends all of them, because 'that which is beyond every name is not identical with what is named'.³⁸ Moreover, some energies (such as God's foreknowledge), although unoriginate, have a temporal end, which also shows that the energies, even though without a beginning,

are not to be identified with the divine *ousia*. Palamas has no doubt that this interpretation accords strictly with the teaching of the Fathers.³⁹

There is one testimony adduced by Barlaam, however, which Palamas admits does seem to support his case. This is from Dionysius' key passage on the essence–energies distinction where the Areopagite speaks of God 'establishing' his powers (τὸν θεὸν ὑποστήσαι ταύτας).⁴⁰ The verb *hyphistēmi* (which gives us the noun *hypostasis*) when used transitively means 'institute', 'give substance to', 'cause to exist', which indicates a beginning in time and therefore suggests that the powers are created. Palamas, however, maintains that it is the intransitive sense ('subsist' or 'exist') that Dionysius intends: 'it indicates existence alone, not the mode of existence as well'.⁴¹ The Father Palamas immediately appeals to in order to confirm this understanding of Dionysius is Basil the Great. It is Basil who is the greatest authority for the essence–energy distinction and by whom Dionysius must be interpreted.

Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, in his recent study of divine simplicity in Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, objects to what he takes to be the Palamite—or rather neo-Palamite—interpretation of *ousia* and *energeiai*.⁴² He rightly holds that Basil and Gregory did not regard God as identical with his properties, arguing that they took an intermediate position between 'the identity thesis' (which maintains that God's essence and his properties are identical) and radical apophaticism (which would deny that the scriptural titles attributed to God give us any real insight into the divine nature).⁴³ The Palamite reading of Gregory of Nyssa, says Radde-Gallwitz, dresses him in the garb of radical apophaticism.⁴⁴ Here he (p.172) seems to have misread Palamas. The radically apophatic view of God is in fact that of Barlaam. Palamas himself takes a position that accords rather well with that of Basil and Gregory as interpreted by Radde-Gallwitz. The *propria* (or *ιδιότητες*) of God (goodness, wisdom, power, justice, and truth), which are to be distinguished from accidents, do not define the essence of God. 'God is simultaneously known and unknown, and part of the theological task is stating clearly where the lines are drawn between these.'⁴⁵ 'Precisely!' Palamas might have said, and the lines are indicated by the distinction between the essence and the energies.

The dispute with Barlaam came to a head in 1341, resulting in Barlaam's condemnation at a council held on 10 June of that year. At a second council, convened in July with Akindynos now as the defendant, the patriarch John Kalekas had Theodore Dexios read St Basil's *Letter* 16, on the impossibility of knowing even the nature of an ant, let alone of God.⁴⁶ This letter (actually a portion of Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* 10) was read in its entirety.⁴⁷ Emphasizing as it does the unknowability of any nature at all without suggesting in what way the knowledge of God was possible, it did not please the Palamites and the session ended in uproar.⁴⁸ Clearly a fuller exposition of Basil was needed.

Palamas must have been aware of this, because most of his discussions of Basil's teaching on the divine energies occur in works written in the months following the council. In his treatise *On unity and distinction* (summer 1341) he asks what may be known from created beings.⁴⁹ First Paul says that God's eternal power (δύναμις) and divinity (θεϊότης) may be understood and seen through the things that he has made (Romans 1:20). This does not mean that his *ousia* may be seen and known, as Eunomius (followed, Palamas claims, by Barlaam and Akindynos) held. What may be known, as the God-bearing Fathers explain, is not the *ousia*, which is unknowable, but all that is 'around the *ousia*' (a Maximian phrase), that is, in Basil's terms, 'the goodness, the wisdom, the power, the divinity, or indeed the majesty of God, which Paul calls "his invisible things" that are "understood through the things he has made" (Romans 1:20).'⁵⁰ How do these 'invisible things' that are 'around the *ousia*' stand in relation to the divine essence?

(p.173) A month or two later, Palamas published his *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite* (autumn 1341). The Barlaamite is represented as maintaining that the energies by which God is known are manifestly created. These are the air, the earth, the sea, and so on, which provide evidence of a creator, the only uncreated energy being the divine *ousia*.⁵¹ To refute this claim, the Orthodox appeals to Basil to prove that there exist realities that are not created and yet are not the divine essence itself. For Basil insists in *Adversus Eunomium* that the divine powers of creation, providence, prescience, and so on, are real but are neither *ousiai* in their own right nor identical with the divine *ousia*.⁵² As he says very clearly in *Letter 234*, ‘the energies are varied but the essence is simple’; moreover, ‘we say that we know our God from his energies, but his essence we do not profess to approach’, for ‘his energies descend to us, but his essence remains inaccessible’.⁵³

Palamas is fond of repeating these phrases.⁵⁴ In *Letter 234*, in which Basil instructs his friend Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, how to reply to questions posed by the Eunomians, they come as the climax of a model response to the question: ‘Do you worship what you know or what you do not know?’ The question, alluding to John 4:22 (Jesus’ remark to the Samaritan woman, ‘You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know’), is a direct challenge to the apophaticism of the orthodox, who are presented with the dilemma of siding either with the Samaritans or with the Eunomians.⁵⁵ In reply, Basil makes a distinction between the divine *ousia*, which is inaccessible to us, and the divine activities *ad extra* (the *energeiai* ‘that descend to us’), such as God’s creative power, benevolence, foreknowledge, and providence, which do not compromise the simplicity of God but are nevertheless accessible to us and enable us to know him. Is this distinction ontological or merely epistemological? Basil himself does not pose the question. Both he and Eunomius took it for granted that knowledge is ‘real’ because the names of things bring us into contact with non-material essences that do not depend for their existence on our thinking of them.⁵⁶ But Basil also insists that knowledge is an equivocal term.⁵⁷ We can know in one sense but not in another. With regard to God, knowledge (p.174) of the divine *ousia* is no more than the perception of God’s incomprehensibility. It is only through the perception of his wisdom, power, and goodness in the world he has created that we can have a conception of God. At the same time, what we perceive in each of these invisible qualities is the whole of God, not part of him, ‘for God is indivisible’.⁵⁸

The discussion of the relationship between the being of God and knowledge of him initiated by Basil was resumed and developed during the hesychast controversy. Palamas concludes his treatise *On divine and divinizing participation* with the statement that when we say that essence and energy are different, we mean that one is known and the other is not known.⁵⁹ Yet the distinction between the two is more than simply epistemological. The key passage in Basil’s *Letter 234* is quoted again at length by Palamas in the fifth of his *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* (dating from 1344), where he argues that an unbalanced emphasis on divine simplicity can be the cause of error. The fifth *Antirrhetic* begins with an examination of the meaning of the verb ‘to see’ (εἶδω), which in the perfect tense (οἶδω) means ‘to know’. According to Palamas, to see the divine light, as the apostles saw it on Mount Tabor, is to acquire experiential knowledge of God. One who sees in this way goes beyond the knowledge ‘that God exists’, yet without arriving at the knowledge of ‘what God is’, which the Fathers agree is impossible. Between these two kinds of knowledge there is therefore a third, an experience of God which is real but does not entail the comprehension of his essence.⁶⁰ This is the knowledge that Basil refers to when he says that we know God from his energies but do not profess to approach his essence.⁶¹

Akindynos, for his part, maintains that the teaching of the theologians is that God can only be seen through created things.⁶² God may be known by inference (by the *analogia entis*), or symbolically, or by likeness, as Moses and the prophets taught. Even Paul, who was taken up into the third heaven, did not know whether he was in the body or out of it—his vision did not bring with it certain knowledge.⁶³ The appeal to biblical testimony leads naturally to a fuller discussion of the transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor. What was the nature of this vision? What kind of knowledge of God did it convey?

With the support of testimonies from Macarius the Great (as paraphrased by Symeon Metaphrastes), Dionysius the Areopagite, and Gregory of Nazianzus, Palamas held that the light of the Transfiguration that illuminated the Apostles (p.175) was the uncreated glory that will illuminate the saints in heaven, who have become conformed to Christ.⁶⁴ This glory was accessible to the senses and could therefore not be the same as the divine essence, and yet at the same time it *was* the glory of God. Barlaam also agreed that it was not the divine essence. The very fact, however, that it was accessible to the senses and transitory made it in his view a created glory. At best, it was a symbol of divinity.⁶⁵ Palamas was shocked to be told that the glory that triumphed over the flesh and will deify the saints is created and ephemeral. As he was to put it in a homily for the night office of the Transfiguration:

The light of the Lord's Transfiguration does not come and go, after all, nor is it circumscribed, nor is it subject to our power of perception, even if it is seen by bodily eyes and for a short period of time, and within the narrow space of the mountaintop. But 'the Lord's initiates were transferred', as one writer puts it, 'from flesh to spirit in that moment, by a change in their sensory powers',⁶⁶ which the Spirit brought about in them. So they saw—in whatever place and degree the power of the divine Spirit bestowed on them—that ineffable light. Those who now do not understand, but blaspheme this light, think that these elect Apostles looked on the light of the transfiguration of the Lord by created powers of perception, and for that reason they attempt to drag down to the creaturely level not only that light, the glory and kingdom of God, but also the power of the Holy Spirit, through which divine things are revealed to the worthy.⁶⁷

Following Maximus the Confessor, Palamas presents the theophany on Mount Tabor as a change in the perception of the Apostles, not a change in Christ himself. The Apostles saw Christ as he really was because their faculties were temporarily enhanced by divine grace.⁶⁸ Akindynos, convinced that the light seen on Mount Tabor by the Apostles was a property of Christ's humanity and therefore a created light, agreed with Barlaam.⁶⁹ It was this insistence on making a clear distinction between what belonged to Christ's divine nature and what belonged to his human nature (in contrast to Palamas, who took the *communicatio idiomatum* for granted) that made the hesychast controversy in its later stages a Christological debate. In the earlier stages, however, the main question was whether there could be a real knowledge of God—not a symbolic or analogical knowledge—which was nevertheless not a knowledge of the divine essence. What Barlaam and Akindynos are unwilling to admit, says Palamas, is that there can be an uncreated light that is not the essence of God. (p.176) 'For the uncreated—which is what they themselves call that light—is an energy, not the essence, of God *if it is known through something created*.'⁷⁰ Later, in his debates with Gregoras (1355–1357), he argues that the proof of the divinity of this light is that it deifies the beholder, quoting (or rather, adapting) in support of this assertion a passage from a homily on the Transfiguration by Andrew of Crete (early eighth century):

This is what we celebrate in our feast today, then: the divinization of nature (τὴν τῆς φύσεως θεώσιν); its change for the better ; the displacement (ἐκστάσιν) and ascent (ἀνάβασιν) [...]

towards what is above nature [...] by which occurs the overwhelming of what is better, [...] or], to put it more precisely, the ineffable act of divinization [...]. This the angels wonder at; to this the archangels sing hymns of praise. And all the spiritual world of supra-mundane beings feasts immaterially on this wonder, offering the clearest and most indisputable witness of the Logos' love for us.⁷¹

If the light of the Transfiguration deifies the beholder, it must itself be divine.⁷² Gregoras holds that this deification is a mental construct (ἀνάπλασμα διανοίας), and thus is created.⁷³ Palamas has no trouble in showing that such an uncompromising view of divine transcendence is not in accord with patristic doctrine. Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Maximus the Confessor, and others teach that the divine light makes the beholder 'another sun'—in other words, that it communicates divinity in its fullness to those who participate in it. The correct exegesis of the Transfiguration therefore entails a distinction between the incomprehensible Godhead and a divinity that is knowable and participable.

These debates on the nature of the light of the Transfiguration are summed up by Palamas in the concluding paragraphs of his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*.⁷⁴ The Akindynists (by whom he seems to mean principally Gregoras) say that the light of Tabor was a phantom and a creature (φάσμα καὶ κτίσμα).⁷⁵ Gregoras did indeed hold that realities in the external world are appropriated by the senses only through the phantom images (εἰδωλα) which they create in the mind. These 'idols' need to be 'melted down' if the mind is to ascend by a 'non-transitional movement' (ἀμετάβατος κίνησις) to real knowledge.⁷⁶ Others (p.177) who claim that the light of God is his substance (clearly turning now to Akindynos), take the light seen on Mount Tabor to be the divine *ousia*, thereby rendering it finite by making it subject to the senses.⁷⁷ In this case, Palamas has drawn an inference from his opponent's position that Akindynos would have rejected. Akindynos did not assign the perceptible light of the Transfiguration to the divine *ousia*. The difference between Palamas and Akindynos on this issue was Christological. Akindynos emphasized the distinction between Christ's two natures, claiming that the light was created because Christ's human nature was created;⁷⁸ Palamas emphasized their union, claiming that the light was uncreated because it was the glory of the divine nature shining through the human, a foretaste of the eschatological vision of God. This divine glory, however, could not have been the divine *ousia* itself because the latter is inaccessible to the senses. Patristic authority could be claimed for either position, but the homiletic tradition on the Transfiguration overwhelmingly supports Palamas.⁷⁹

Can One Speak of a Higher and a Lower Divinity?

The first mention of a higher and a lower divinity (θεότης ὑπερκειμένη and θεότης ὑφειμένη) is in a passage of Barlaam's lost treatise *Against the Messalians* quoted by Palamas in his *Third Letter to Akindynos* (1341).⁸⁰ Alluding to Dionysius' statement that the divine attributes of goodness, life, and wisdom are processions of the one God, not higher and lower divinities, Barlaam says:

If both the light which was caused and participable and became visible on the mountain and is in some sense called 'divinity', and also the nature of God which (p.178) is beyond all cause and participation, vision and comprehension, naming and manifestation, are uncreated, how will they be one and not two uncreated divinities, a higher one and a lower one?⁸¹

Palamas objects strongly to Barlaam's inference. If the light of Tabor is created and not a divine energy, he declares, there would be no uncreated divinity at all, for if the energy is created it follows that the nature is created. The simplicity of God does not mean that there are no distinctions within him. 'He who says this says that the only uncreated divinity is the divine essence mutilates the divinity.'⁸² For as Dionysius says, there is also power, will, energy, and so on.

Yet there is also a sense in which one may accept that there is a higher and a lower divinity, for again according to Dionysius, 'theosis is a gift of the transcendent *ousia* of God'.⁸³ This does not entail the ditheism that Barlaam claims it does. It simply acknowledges the distinction between the giver and the gift while affirming at the same time that the gift is nothing less than God himself. To deny that the gift is a divine energy is to attribute a created component to God. Yet the divine *ousia*, which is utterly transcendent, may indeed be said to be 'higher' than the divine energy, which is participable by us.

This was a concession to Barlaam from which Palamas wished to distance himself after the councils of June and July 1341. In *Unity and distinction* (summer 1341) he complains that Barlaam and Akindynos calumniate him by claiming that he teaches two divinities, a higher and a lower.⁸⁴ On the contrary, he insists, it is they who teach two divinities, a higher uncreated one and a lower created one, thus dividing the one God into two:

Who then, if he is not completely out of his mind, would say that by acting and moving someone who acts and moves possesses many things that contradict each other, such as what is uncreated and what is created? It would be the same as saying that someone who stands still is multiple by the act of standing still, even though standing still differs from someone who stands and moving differs from someone who moves, and by this difference each is not the same as the other; if, on the other hand, these things do not differ from each other through being contradictory, there is nothing to prevent them from being one. It is in this manner, then, that the divine energy does not differ from the divine essence, for it is the one divinity of God in essence and in energy—and they are not only one but simple.⁸⁵

(p.179) In the *Apologia* (autumn 1341), Palamas goes on to argue, on the basis of Dionysius' statement, in his second Letter, that the principle of divinity (the 'thearchy') and the 'deifying gift' are both 'divinity', that the gift of deifying grace as well as the giver of the gift must be uncreated divinity, because that which is created cannot deify.⁸⁶ And in the *Treatise clarifying in brief the opinion of Barlaam and Akindynos* (c.1348), he strongly repudiates the accusation that he teaches a higher and a lower divinity, attributing it to an attempt by Barlaam to conceal his own impiety.⁸⁷

Despite the destruction of all copies of *Against the Messalians* after the council, Barlaam's accusation that Palamas taught a higher and lower divinity, coupled with Palamas' conceding in his letter to Akindynos that there was a sense in which one could say that there was a lower divinity (that of deification), rang alarm bells in the minds of many who were still undecided about Palamite teaching. In two of his letters of this period Palamas goes over the same ground in some detail. Writing to John Gabras (winter 1342–1343), a scholar who eventually accepted Palamas' doctrine but at this time leaned more towards Akindynos, he defends himself against the charge of teaching two divinities.⁸⁸ In a letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos (1343–1344), a metropolitan who signed the Tome of 1341 only after some hesitation, he devotes a long paragraph to the meaning of the word 'divinity'.⁸⁹ It is Akindynos who divides the one God into two, into created and uncreated, Palamas insists, not he himself. Akindynos calls the divine nature uncreated, but the divine light, which is the radiance of the divine nature by which God communes with the worthy, he calls created. If the divine light is

created, so too is the divine will. Akindynos ignores Maximus who says, ‘just as the divine nature is trihypostatic, unoriginated, uncreated, and incomprehensible, so is its will’.⁹⁰ It is Akindynos who suffers from ditheism. If we say with Barlaam and Akindynos that God is simply *ousia*, we deprive him of power, will, and energy.⁹¹

Akindynos, for his part, cannot accept that the deifying gift is not a created grace. The ‘new theologian’, he says, in a letter of 1343 to an unnamed correspondent,

not only in long written discourses but also by word of mouth has been proclaiming two uncreated divinities, not to say actually a great many, ‘one higher and the other infinitely lower’; one invisible and the other visible even to the bodily eyes of (p.180) certain men; one activating and the other activated; one nameless and the other having a name; one being the essence and the other not; one incapable of being shared and the other capable of being shared. The latter he calls deification and power and energy and grace and illumination and form and essential and natural glory of God, being separate, he says, from his essence and nature.⁹²

What Akindynos most objects to is that these ‘divinities’, in his view, add to the persons of the Trinity, tearing apart what Dionysius calls the ‘supremely united monad’.

In another letter, addressed to the patriarch John Kalekas in 1343–1344, Akindynos complains again of Palamas’ ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ divinities, which ‘surpasses pagan polytheism’, compromising the one divinity in three hypostases.⁹³ Two or three years later, in a conversation reported by him in which he attempts to win over a waverer to his own side, he makes the same point: Palamas’ multitude of coeternal ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ divinities contradicts ‘the one and only indivisible monad in the Trinity’.⁹⁴

Palamas gives his considered answer to these charges in 1349–1350, in his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*. It is noteworthy that here he avoids any talk of ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ divinities, even though he had been prepared eight years previously, in his *Third Letter to Akindynos*, to concede that these expressions (at least, in the singular) could have an acceptable meaning. His main concern now, as metropolitan of Thessaloniki, is unequivocally and authoritatively to counter the calumny of ditheism. His position may be set out in the form of the following propositions:

1. 1. There are other distinctions in the Godhead alongside the hypostases.⁹⁵
2. 2. These distinctions are identical for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and therefore belong to the divine *ousia*, not to the hypostases;⁹⁶
3. 3. God is a transcendent *ousia* whose operations (*energeiai*) and relations do not produce any composition or alteration.⁹⁷
4. 4. To assert that God is *ousia* alone with nothing observed in him is to represent God as pure being with no operations (*energeai*) or relations.⁹⁸
5. 5. Not everything said of God refers to his *ousia*, for as Dionysius says, ‘All things participate in the providence pouring forth from the Godhead that is the cause of all’.⁹⁹
6. (p.181) 6. The powers and energies of God are eternal (cf. Micah 5:1, LXX).¹⁰⁰
7. 7. We were created to become partakers of God’s own divinity (cf. 2 Peter 1:4), which can only mean participation in the divine energy, not in the divine *ousia*.¹⁰¹

The problem for Palamas is how to account for God’s activity in the temporal realm, even to the extent of sharing himself intimately with believers, while maintaining at the same time his transcendence and simplicity. It is taken for granted that God is not a discrete being at the apex of a hierarchy of beings. According to a tradition going back to Plato, he is ‘beyond

being' (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας),¹⁰² which means that he is the cause of all that exists and therefore “‘permanent reality’” as contrasted with change and flux’.¹⁰³ The question then arises how this ‘permanent reality’ relates to the world of change and flux? The answer must lie in God’s transcendence and simplicity not being absolute. As Palamas points out, we already make distinctions in the Godhead by speaking of the three hypostases, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A further distinction must be made between *ousia* (what God is) and *energeia* (what God does), because ‘what God does’ cannot be distributed among the hypostases even if it is manifested in distinct ways by them; it must belong to the divine nature as such.

But does this not multiply distinctions in God unnecessarily? Why do we need more than the revealed hypostases of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? This was an objection made by Palamas’ opponents (and still made by his critics today), which Palamas addresses at length in a letter of 1343–1344 to another sceptical bishop, Daniel of Ainos.¹⁰⁴ The anti-Palamites ask what need there is for the Son to possess *energeia* when he is *energeia* in itself (αὐτοενέργεια). Palamas replies that the distinction between being and acting cannot coincide with the distinction between the hypostases:

If someone were to say that the Son himself is to be called *energeia* by the fact of existing inseparably from the Father—but this is not even simply an *energeia*, being in a specific hypostasis—these people assert that nowhere is it written that God possesses *energeiai*, whether self-subsistent or not self-subsistent—one could reply as follows: How can you maintain, my learned friends, that *ousia* and *energeia* are the same thing, and then say that the *ousia* is common to the Father, Son, and Spirit, but the *energeia* is not common to them? And how is it that when the *ousia* is not a hypostasis or even something hypostatic—for ‘hypostasis’ does not refer to only one of the three persons, nor is it single—you make the *energeia* (p.182) hypostatic? For what belong to the Son or the Spirit are the hypostases and the attributes that pertain to them.¹⁰⁵

The hypostatic distinction and the essence–energies distinction are not to be confused. Nor does one distinction exclude the other; both are needed. Essence and energies have no independent existence apart from the persons. Nor do the persons operate without the energies, for each of the persons of the Trinity is divine *ousia* with relations (hence their triadic unity), and it is the divine relations both *ad intra* (generation, procession, etc.) and *ad extra* (creation, goodness, wisdom, foreknowledge, etc.) that are the *energeiai*.¹⁰⁶

The testimonies that Palamas assembles to support his contention are from Micah 5:1 (‘and his goings forth were from the beginning, from the days of eternity’), Maximus the Confessor (‘In no way would we wish to assert that in the case of the incarnate and perfectly hominized Word the energy is natural or hypostatic’),¹⁰⁷ and the Sixth Ecumenical Council (which decreed that Christ is to be worshipped not only in two natures but also in two energies and two wills). Palamas is firmly within the Cappadocian–Dionysian–Maximian tradition. According to (Ps.-) Gregory of Nyssa, whom he quotes, the verse from the prophet Micah is to be interpreted as referring to the uncreated energies of the Godhead.¹⁰⁸ Even if we accept ‘generation’ (γέννησις) as included in Micah’s ‘goings forth’ (ἐξοδοί), says Palamas (referring now to intra-Trinitarian relations), the Barlaamite position is wrong because ‘generation’ or ‘non-generation’ are not natures, even if ‘generation’ is uncreated and without beginning.¹⁰⁹

Palamas made his final statement on this issue on 8 June 1351, at the third session of the council of 1351. Repudiating the charge of ditheism or polytheism as emphatically as possible, he declared:

With regard to the charge brought by my opponents this is what I say. That there are two or many deities in the Holy Trinity, so that the Father is one deity, the Son another, and the Spirit another, I have not held, nor do I hold, nor indeed by the grace of God will I hold. Moreover, I place any who do hold this under anathema. I do not acknowledge any other deity apart from the trihypostatic deity, nor have I proclaimed any divine or angelic essence or hypostasis, according to the great Dionysius, apart from the divine energy and certain processions proceeding by nature and from all eternity from the deity in the name of God, with the intention to speak in harmony with the saints. And I would not even have said this unless (p.183) I had been forced to do so by my opponent and as a rejoinder in my struggle against him, who says that the only uncreated divinity is the essence of God, and assigns every divine power and energy differing from the essence to the created order. Above all, I would say this, that I have not inferred from these premises that there are many deities, as they falsely allege, which is evident from my own writings and, among others, from my confession. At all events, it is my contention that what has been alleged by my opponents is not something that I have professed, for I acknowledge one deity, and that one as trihypostatic, omnipotent, and active. Besides, neither then was it my intention to be concerned with words but the whole struggle was about realities, nor now do I quibble about names and syllables. On the contrary, when realities are proclaimed in an orthodox fashion, I am ready, by the grace of Christ, to hold and accept everything that the divine synod determines about the words.¹¹⁰

Thus when Palamas spoke of ‘divinities’ or ‘deities’ (θεότητες), he was not referring to discrete entities, as the Akindynists assumed. He was simply, on the authority of the Areopagite, distinguishing God as being from God as activity.¹¹¹ Insofar as God’s activity is accessible to creatures, whereas his being is not, his being (*ousia*) may be said to be ‘higher’ than his activity (*energeia*), but the distinction expressed in this way was so open to misinterpretation that Palamas quickly dropped it. Meyendorff insisted that the distinction was ‘real’. His opinion has been followed by many scholars who have accordingly accused Palamas of reifying essence and energies in an unacceptable manner.¹¹² It is clear, however, that Palamas did not regard the distinction as ‘real’ in this sense. It may be asked why, then, did he not use the expression ‘notional’ (κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν), as Philotheos and others of his followers did in later years. I have suggested elsewhere that this was a result of his study of Eunomius, who had used κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν to mean ‘fictional’.¹¹³ A close reading of a wide range of Palamas’ texts reveals that the distinction Palamas intends is indeed notional but also reflects reality—what contemporary Scholastics termed a *distinctio rationis cum fundamento in re*.

The Palamite Encounter with Aquinas

Palamas himself knew nothing of Thomas Aquinas. Three years before his death, however, a significant event occurred which was to enrich Palamite theology from a new quarter. This was the translation into Greek of Aquinas’ (p.184) *Summa contra Gentiles* by Demetrios Kydones, the chief minister of the emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, who tells us that he completed his task on 24 December 1354. The interest generated by this venture encouraged Kydones to undertake the translation of further texts, including (with the collaboration of his younger brother Prochoros) the *Summa theologiae*. These texts were eagerly read and exerted a considerable influence on both Palamites and anti-Palamites.¹¹⁴

Curiously, the influence of Aquinas in the years immediately following the publication of the Kydones translations was limited largely to copying Aquinas' method of argumentation. Shortly before 1368, Prochoros Kydones wrote a voluminous anti-Palamite work in six books, *On Essence and Energy*. In the first two books he reproduces verbatim many passages from Thomas that he and his brother had translated from the *Summa contra Gentiles*, the *Summa theologiae*, and *De potentia*, but he does not engage directly with Palamas except in the last book, which is on the light of Mount Tabor. There he states:

Those who say that in the case of the light of Tabor there is some sort of light within its essence which is different from the essence are in error. First, because of homonymy (which has also troubled them in many other places), for they hear what was [seen] on Tabor and God himself both called light; secondly, because it seems absurd that the essence of God should be participable, they declared that there is some sort of light within it, just as they speak of life and goodness and wisdom, dividing God into participable and imparticipable, lower and higher, all of which has been proved to be false.¹¹⁵

Prochoros' own commentary on this statement was quoted at length at his trial.¹¹⁶ God, he says, is called light by analogy. His opponents call the light on Tabor a theophany when in reality it was a created divinity. When Scripture refers to human beings as 'holy ones, kings, gods, and lords', it is because they share in certain attributes not in the cause itself, which remains simple.¹¹⁷ It is therefore not absurd to say that just as there are many created gods and lords, and so forth, but there is one uncreated God and Lord, and so forth, so one can speak of many holinesses and divinities and kingdoms and lordships which are created and one holiness, and lordship and divinity which is uncreated and transcendent.

These statements are not from Aquinas but echo Akindynos, who seems to have been Prochoros' main source for his interpretation of the Transfiguration. Indeed the material from Aquinas assembled by Prochoros in *On Essence and Energy* does not seem to have aroused any particular ire in Philotheos or in the (p.185) commission he appointed to investigate its orthodoxy.¹¹⁸ On the occasion anything resembling an opinion of Aquinas is censured, it is put down to Prochoros' own invention:

Among the titles at the head of his chapters are the following: 'That the intellectual energy of God is his essence.' 'That the intellectual power of God is his essence.' 'That the wisdom of God is his essence.' 'That the truth of God is his essence.' 'That the will of God is his essence.' And he proves these not from the Holy Scriptures, nor by citing the pronouncements of the saints, but from his own thinking and supposedly using Aristotelian syllogisms.¹¹⁹

Although Prochoros reproduces a number of statements from Aquinas, Philotheos is correct in claiming that many of the views expressed by Prochoros are peculiar to him.¹²⁰ Indeed no Greek thinker in the fourteenth century attempted to refute the essence–energies distinction on Thomist principles. As Marcus Plested has pointed out, the first to attempt to do so was Andrew Chrysoberges (d.1451), who joined the Dominican order, became archbishop of Rhodes and later of Cyprus, and was one of the leading spokesmen on the Latin side at the Council of Ferrara–Florence (1438–1439).¹²¹ At no time until well after the hesychast controversy had been settled definitively in Palamas' favour, so far as the Orthodox were concerned, did the disputants pit Aquinas against Palamas.

Conclusion

Older scholars, led by Endre von Ivánka and Jean-Philippe Houdret,¹²² were inclined to drive a wedge between the Cappadocian Fathers and Gregory Palamas. Modern research, however, has tended to see Palamas as a faithful interpreter of Basil the Great and of the two Gregories of Nyssa and Nazianzus.¹²³ This has not always served to exonerate Palamas from error. Dorothea Wendebourg, for (p.186) example, sees the Cappadocians as laying the foundations, through their essence–energies distinction, for what she regards as the ‘dysfunctionalization’ (*Entfunktionalisierung*) of Orthodox soteriology under Palamite influence.¹²⁴ A number of philosopher-theologians, however, such as Mascall,¹²⁵ Bradshaw,¹²⁶ and Tollefsen,¹²⁷ have found the essence–energies distinction intellectually coherent and useful for clarifying the notion of participation. Mascall draws attention specifically to the idea of participation as ‘a union which is not to be thought of merely in terms of either efficient or exemplary causality but rather of active presence’.¹²⁸ It is the development of this dynamic aspect of participation, representing the active presence of God in the world together with the human response to it, which is Palamas’ fundamental contribution to our understanding of divine–human relations.

Palamas chose to use the Cappadocian term ‘energy’ (ἐνέργεια), and was even prepared initially to use the expression ‘lower divinity’ (ὕφειμένη θεότης), to suggest the active presence of God to us in a mode that was not ‘essential’ and yet was without any created intermediary. This was a move he regretted, as it was seen by Barlaam, and subsequently by Akindynos and Gregoras, as compromising God’s transcendence and unity. All agreed that our relationship with God consisted of more than inferential knowledge of him, but each had his own version of what that ‘more’ was. For Barlaam it was the gift of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding imparted by divine ‘illumination’ (ἐλλαμπισ) to those who were worthy to receive him—including not only the saints but also the great pagan philosophers of antiquity. For Akindynos, it was deifying grace (θεουργός χάρις) bestowed by the Holy Spirit. For Gregoras it was a motionless movement of the mind leading to an intellectual apprehension of God (νοερά κατάληψις) that was at the same time an ‘unknowing’ (ἄγνωσίᾳ) because God is beyond being. Palamas’ positing of a bipolarity in the Godhead, which they branded ‘ditheism’, was totally unacceptable to them.

For Palamas, however, the transcendence of God was not absolute. Basil had taught him that the divine *energeiai* are not external operations of God but are God himself as manifested and active within creation. Dionysius had shown him that God is present in creation not only as a cause is present in its effect, but as a constant going out of himself in ecstatic love and a returning to himself in communion with the believer, an *exitus–reditus* that leaves the believer purified, illuminated, and perfected through participation in him. Maximus the Confessor had shown him that ‘the things around God’ are divine activities in (p.187) which human beings can share, attaining deification not through becoming what God is by nature but by sharing in what God does. Our reciprocal relationship with God who is actively present to us, God as *energeia*, was what Palamas strove to convey in everything he wrote.

The litmus test was the transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor. It was in their exegesis of this passage from the synoptic gospels that Akindynos and his supporters revealed their vulnerability. For the protagonists on both sides, their conception of the relationship between the human and the divine in the Christian life mirrored their understanding of the union of the human and the divine in Christ himself. The fundamental question concerned the nature of

the light seen radiating from Christ by the Apostles on the mountain. Was it human or divine, created or uncreated? For Akindynos, the fact that the light was transitory proved that it was not divine; it was a created light that belonged to Christ's human nature. For Palamas, however, the transience of the light was a characteristic of the experience of the beholder, not of Christ. In conformity with a teaching first adumbrated by Cyril and the Cappadocians and later formalized by Maximus and others as the 'reciprocity of the idioms' (ἀντίδοσις τῶν ἰδιωμάτων,¹²⁹ which passed into Latin as *communicatio idiomatum*), the attributes of divinity and humanity in Christ remained distinct. But by virtue of the unconfused union of the natures, the divine attributes could be predicated of the human nature. Thus the glory of Christ's human nature was the glory of his divinity. Those who denied it were guilty of Christological error. This was spelled out most clearly in 1368 at the trial of Prochoros Kydones, where Prochoros argued that the light of Tabor was both created and uncreated because Christ was a combination of created humanity and uncreated divinity united by a human soul. It was this Nestorianizing Christology, rather than his personal attacks on Palamas' memory, that ensured his condemnation.¹²⁹

Palamas' canonization in 1368, as the climax of the patriarch Philotheos' handling of the Prochoros case, effectively put an end to any further challenge to Palamite doctrine by loyal Orthodox. Many who could not accept this outcome joined the Latin Church, taking with them their hostility to the essence–energy distinction.¹³⁰ Their writings passed into the great Western libraries, to be studied and used again in the seventeenth century in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church's new emphasis, in the wake of the Council of Trent, on her own soteriological exclusivity. The apparent incompatibility of the Thomist doctrine of grace with the essence–energies distinction also served to reinforce Western hostility to Palamas. Meyendorff's presentation of Palamite theology, governed as it was by an apologetic agenda, (p.188) successfully re-established Palamas as a fundamental Orthodox thinker but drove too strong a wedge between the essence and the energies, giving many, such as Williams,¹³¹ LaCugna,¹³² and Milbank,¹³³ the impression that the difference is purely ontological. Palamas himself, however, repeatedly emphasizes the unity of the transcendent and the immanent aspects of divinity: God as being (*ousia*) and God as activity (*energeia*) are not different entities, for God is wholly present in each of his energies.

Meyendorff was nevertheless right to emphasize the importance to Palamas of the *experience* of God. The philosophical structures that Palamas elaborated, sometimes in a deliberately provocative fashion for rhetorical effect, were designed to safeguard not only intellectual knowledge of God but also the reality of communion with him. It is to the nature of this communion that we now turn.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ For the history of the term in non-Christian thought, see Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 13–31. For the term in Christian usage, see also Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 172–8.

⁽²⁾ Eric D. Perl, *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2007), 20.

⁽³⁾ Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. and trans. E. R. Dodds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 27.

⁽⁴⁾ According to Perl, 'Reversion, in fact, is nothing other than participation, the participation of the determined effect in its causal determination, considered as an activity of the participant' (*Theophany*, 40).

⁽⁵⁾ Perl, *Theophany*, 29–32, 46–7.

⁽⁶⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 19 (Meyendorff, 677; Perrella I, 880). Sinkewicz dates the treatise to 1340.

⁽⁷⁾ Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 7, 645A (Suchla, 131. 9–11).

⁽⁸⁾ From Barlaam, *Against the Messalians*, cited by Palamas at *Triads* III, 2, 21 (Meyendorff, 679; Perrella I, 884); cf. Fyrigos, *Dalla controversia palamitica*, 155.

⁽⁹⁾ On this point, see the illuminating discussion in Perl, *Theophany*, 30–4.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 23 (Meyendorff, 683–5; Perrella I, 886–8).

⁽¹¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 25 (Meyendorff, 687–9; Perrella I, 890); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 5, 644A (Suchla, 129. 6–7) and Plotinus, *Enneads* IV, 1, 1, 1. 25–30.

⁽¹²⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 25 (Meyendorff, 689; Perrella I, 892): ἀμέθεκτος ἄρα καὶ μεθεκτός ὑπάρχει ὁ αὐτὸς θεός. Cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 5, 644A (Suchla, 129. 3).

⁽¹³⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 17 (Christou II, 110; Perrella I, 1012), quoting (Ps-) Basil, *Against Eunomius*, Book IV, PG 29, 660B.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 41 (Christou II, 126; Perrella I, 1044), quoting Maximus the Confessor, *Capita theologica et oeconomica* I, 50 (PG 90, 1101B; trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, *Philokalia*, vol. 2, 124). The whole of chapters 48 and 50 of Maximus' text are quoted by Palamas as central to the theme of participation.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 48 (Christou II, 133; Perrella I, 1058).

⁽¹⁶⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 52 (Christou II, 136; Perrella I, 1064).

⁽¹⁷⁾ Palamas, *Dialogue* 46 (Christou II, 210; Perrella I, 1212); also *Participation* 9 (Christou II, 145; Perrella I, 1082), and *Theophanes* 30 (Christou II, 258; Perrella I, 1310); cf. Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 1 (Dodds, 2), and Dionysius, *Divine Names* V, 8, 824AB (Suchla, 187. 8–12).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Palamas qualifies this in *Against Gregoras* IV, 62 (Christou IV, 374–5; Perrella II, 1200); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 5, 644A (Suchla, 129. 4–5).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Palamas, *Dialogue* 47 (Christou II, 211; Perrella I, 1214).

⁽²⁰⁾ Palamas, *Participation* 9 (Christou II, 145; Perrella I, 1082), adapting Dionysius the Areopagite, *Celestial Hierarchy* III, 2, 165A (Heil and Ritter, 17. 10–18. 3). Dionysius himself adapts Plato, *Theaetetus* 176b.

⁽²¹⁾ Palamas, *Participation* 14 (Christou II, 149–50; Perrella I, 1090–2); cf. *Theophanes* 15 (Christou II, 239; Perrella I, 1272).

⁽²²⁾ See also chapter 78, analysed by Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 188–90.

⁽²³⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 86 and 87 (Sinkewicz, 184; Perrella III, 98–100); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* V, 5. 820C (Suchla, 184. 8–16), and XII, 4, 972B (Suchla, 225. 14–20).

⁽²⁴⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 88 (Sinkewicz, 186; Perrella III, 100): Ἡ... τοῦ αὐτοεῖναι μετοχή κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον οὐδενὸς μετέχει. The translation is Sinkewicz's. The quotation from Dionysius has not been identified.

- (²⁵) Palamas, *150 Chapters* 104 (Sinkewicz, 200; Perrella III, 112): ἐν τῷ παντὶ δέ ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς καὶ τὸ πᾶν ἐν τῷ θεῷ, ὁ μὲν ὡς συνεχών, τὸ δὲ ὡς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ συνεχόμενον.
- (²⁶) Dionysius, *Divine Names* V, 5, 820A: πάντα αὐτοῦ μετέχει... καὶ αὐτός... τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν (Suchla, 183. 15–16); cf. also Gregory of Nyssa, *On the soul and the resurrection*, PG 46, 73A: καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ πᾶν ἀνακράσει συνέχειν ἐν τῷ εἶναι τὰ ὄντα, and the excellent discussion of this passage by Torstein Theodore Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 97–9.
- (²⁷) Palamas, *150 Chapters* 105. 3–4 (Sinkewicz, 200; Perrella III, 112).
- (²⁸) See further, Norman Russell, ‘“Partakers of the Divine Nature” (2 Peter 1:4) in the Byzantine Tradition’, in Julian Chrysostomides (ed.), *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ Essays presented to Joan Hussey for her 80th birthday* (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1988), 51–67.
- (²⁹) Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), v.
- (³⁰) Stead, *Divine Substance*, 138.
- (³¹) Eunomius, *Liber apologeticus* 7. 2–3 (ed. and trans. Vaggione, 40–1).
- (³²) Eunomius, *Liber apologeticus* 8. 1–2 (ed. Vaggione, 40).
- (³³) Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 254.
- (³⁴) Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 256.
- (³⁵) Georgios D. Martzelos, *Οὐσία καὶ ἐνέργεια τοῦ Θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν Μέγαν Βασίλειον* (Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1984), 39. These arguments are summarized in Basil’s *Letter* 234, to Amphilochius.
- (³⁶) Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 371–2.
- (³⁷) Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 4 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 649; Perrella I, 856).
- (³⁸) Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 10 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 661; Perrella I, 868).
- (³⁹) Tollefsen finds in Palamas ‘no breach with the legacy of Greek–Byzantine theology’ (*Activity and Participation*, 185). Bradshaw, whose *Aristotle East and West* is devoted largely to the history of the term *energeia*, finds Palamas in full continuity with his predecessors but comments that he understandably fails ‘to draw together all the diverse strands of the eastern tradition’ (*Aristotle East and West*, 242).
- (⁴⁰) Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 18 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 675; Perrella I, 878); cf. Dionysius the Areopagite, *Divine Names* XI, 6, 953C (Suchla, 222. 3–4).
- (⁴¹) Palamas, *Triads* III, 2, 18 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 675; Perrella I, 878). Alexander Golitzin gives a convincing exegesis of *Divine Names* XI, 6 (Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 77–9), which supports that of Palamas.
- (⁴²) Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 221–4.
- (⁴³) Radde-Gallwitz, *Divine Simplicity*, 6–14. Radde-Gallwitz aligns himself here with Stead although later he criticizes him for being too Palamite.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Radde-Gallwitz, *Divine Simplicity*, 221.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Radde-Gallwitz, *Divine Simplicity*, 221; cf. Radde-Gallwitz's discussion of Gregory of Nyssa's understanding of the *propria*, *ibid.*, 200–12.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Hero, *Letters of Gregory Akindynos*, xviii–xx; Nadal, 'Gregorio Akíndinos', 209–12. For reasons suggested by Meyendorff (*Introduction*, 88–90 [*Study*, 58–9]) the debates of the second council are not reported in the Tome of 1341. We know of them from Akindynos' speech delivered in the presence of the patriarch some time afterwards (ed. Nadal, *Discurso ante Juan Kalekas*, in 'Gregorio Akíndinos', 258–84).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Akíndinos, *Discurso*, §7.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Akíndinos, *Discurso*, §8.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Palamas, *On unity and distinction* 8 (Christou II, 74; Perrella I, 940).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Palamas, *On unity and distinction* 8 (Christou II, 74; Perrella I, 940), citing Basil, *Letter* 234, 869A (Deferrari, iii, 372). Palamas must have been satisfied with this formulation, because he reproduces the whole passage as chapter 82 of his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, adding as a concluding comment: 'Therefore, the energy of God known by the mind from creatures is uncreated and is not the substance, because it is presented not only in the singular but also in the plural' (trans. Sinkewicz, 181).

⁽⁵¹⁾ Palamas, *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite* 42 (Christou II, 206; Perrella I, 1204).

⁽⁵²⁾ Basil, *Adversus Eunomium* 1, 8 (PG 29, 528B).

⁽⁵³⁾ Basil, *Letter* 234, 869A (Deferrari, iii, 372).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ They occur again in *Dialogue* 51 (Christou II, 214; Perrella I, 1220), *Apologia* 39 (Christou II, 124; Perrella I, 1040), *Theophanes* 13, 21 and 25 (Christou II, 237, 248, and 251; Perrella I, 1268, 1290 and 1296), and *Letter to Arsenios* 8 (Christou II, 321; Perrella III, 616), all from 1341–2, and later in *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* IV, ix, 19 (Christou III, 255; Perrella II, 412) and V, iv, 12 (Christou III, 296; Perrella II, 490), *Against Gregoras* II, 48–9 (Christou IV, 299–300; Perrella II, 1050–2), and *150 Chapters* 111 (Sinkewicz, 208–10; Perrella III, 120–2).

⁽⁵⁵⁾ For a recent discussion of Basil's *Letter* 234, see Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 35–9.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 254.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Basil, *Letter* 235 (Deferrari, iii, 378).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Basil, *Letter* 235 (Deferrari, iii, 382).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Palamas, *On divine and divinizing participation* 29 (Christou II, 162; Perrella I, 1116).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* V, iv, 12 (Christou III, 295–6; Perrella II, 490). Palamas speaks of a dual knowledge, ignoring the first kind because it is not relevant in the context of his argument at this point.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Palamas, *Against Akindynos* V, iv, 12 (Christou III, 296; Perrella II, 490), citing Basil's *Letter* 234, 868C–869A (Deferrari 370–2).

⁽⁶²⁾ Akindynos, in passages cited by Palamas at *Against Akindynos* V, ii, 2 (Christou III, 288; Perrella II, 476) and V, iii, 9 (Christou III, 293–4; Perrella II, 486); cf. Akindynos, *Letter* 62. 31–2 (Hero, 252).

⁽⁶³⁾ Akindynos, *Refutation* IV, 7 (ed. Nadal, 322–3); trans. Nadal, *résistance*, 355–6.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 10 (Meyendorff, 575–7; Perrella I, 786–8). The passages cited are from ‘Macarius’, *On the raising up of the mind* 1 (PG 34, 889C = Logos 48, 6–7, ed. Berthold II, 104), Dionysius the Areopagite, *Divine Names* I, 4, 592BC, and Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letter* 101 to Cledonius (PG 37, 181AB).

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 11 (Meyendorff, 577–9; Perrella I, 788–90).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua to John* 7 (PG 91, 1125).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Palamas, *Homily* 34, 8 (trans. Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 360).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Cf. also Palamas, *Triads* III, 3, 9 (Meyendorff, 711–13; Perrella I, 912), and *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 7 (Christou II, 416–17; Perrella III, 796).

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 62. 48–53 (Hero, 252).

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* V, v, 14 (Christou III, 297; Perrella II, 492) (my emphasis).

⁽⁷¹⁾ Andrew of Crete, *Homily* 7 (PG 97, 932–57) (trans. Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 182–3), cited by Palamas, *Against Gregoras* III, 19 (Christou IV, 332; Perrella II, 1116). The ellipsis marks indicate Palamas’ own abbreviation of the text.

⁽⁷²⁾ This was a principle well established in the patristic tradition since the time of Athanasius, who argued for the full divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit from the effects produced by participation in them. See further Russell, *Deification*, 169–78.

⁽⁷³⁾ Palamas, *Against Gregoras* III, 20 (Christou IV, 332; Perrella II, 1116).

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 146–50 (Sinkewicz, 250–6; Perrella III, 160–4).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 146. 4–5; 148. 1 (Sinkewicz, 250–2; Perrella III, 160–2). The word φάσμα in this sense is a Platonic term indicating (in *Theaetetus* 155a, for example) a subjective notion of a relational property.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ On Gregoras’ epistemology, see Moschos, Πλατωνισμός, 159–77.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 150 (Sinkewicz, 256; Perrella III, 164).

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 62. 46–54 (Hero, 252).

⁽⁷⁹⁾ An exception is a Greek homily from Southern Italy, perhaps of the fourteenth century, which teaches that it was Adam’s glory, lost by his disobedience, which was revealed on Tabor by Christ the new Adam (ed. Maurice Sachot, ‘Édition de l’homélie pseudo-Chrysostomienne BHG 1998 (=CPG 5017) sur la Transfiguration’, *Revue des sciences religieuses* 58 (1984), 91–108; trans. Daley, *Light on the Mountain*, 319–24. The homily was known to Palamas’ opponents; it was cited by Gregoras as a text of John Chrysostom (Palamas, *Against Gregoras* IV, 24 [Christou IV, 353–4; Perrella II, 1158]).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Palamas’ *Third Letter to Akindynos* was first published by Meyendorff as ‘Une lettre inédite de Grégoire Palamas à Akindynos’ in *Theologia* 24 (1953), 3–28 (= Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm*, Study III) from the collected works of Palamas in the

fifteenth-century manuscripts Paris. gr. 1238 and Coisl. 99, and is reprinted in Christou I, 296–312, and Perrella III, 574–604. Nadal discovered a different version in a collection of Akindynos' works, Monacensis gr. 223, and demonstrated that Meyendorff's text from the Paris manuscripts is a redacted version of the letter as actually received by Akindynos, which is preserved in the Munich manuscript (Juan Sergio Nadal, S.J., 'La redaction première de la *Troisième lettre de Palamas à Akindynos*', *OCP* 40 [1974], 233–85). Nadal believes that Palamas redacted the letter in order to conceal his true opinions. What has been omitted or added, however, does not seem to change the sense; for the most part it adds attributions and streamlines the argument.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Barlaam, *Against the Messalians*, in Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 6 (Meyendorff, 'Lettre', 19. 3–8; Perrella III, 582); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* V, 1, 2, 816C (Suchla 181. 17–18).

⁽⁸²⁾ Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 9 (Meyendorff, 'Lettre', 20. 13–17; Perrella III, 584).

⁽⁸³⁾ Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 15 (Meyendorff, 'Lettre', 23. 28–9; Perrella III, 592).

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Palamas, *Unity and distinction* 20 (Christou II, 83–4; Perrella I, 960).

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Palamas, *Unity and distinction* 22 (Christou II, 85; Perrella I, 962). Perrella comments: 'Palamas rightly insists that if an energy is not a determination of the essence, because it is only a manifestation, it does not introduce multiplicity in the subject to which it pertains' (Perrella I, 962, n. 41).

⁽⁸⁶⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 30 (Christou II, 118; Perrella I, 1028). The principle that 'that which is created cannot deify' goes back to Athanasius, who used it as one of his chief anti-Arian arguments.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Palamas, *Treatise clarifying in brief the opinions of Barlaam and Akindynos* 5 (Christou II, 91; Perrella II, 1434).

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Palamas, *Letter to John Gabras* 18 (Christou II, 345–6; Perrella III, 660).

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Palamas, *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 5 (Christou II, 414–15; Perrella III, 790).

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Maximus the Confessor, *Opuscula theologica et polemica, ad Marinum*, PG 91, 268D.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Palamas, *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 6 (Christou II, 416; Perrella III, 792).

⁽⁹²⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 27. 81–91 (trans. Hero, 93, modified).

⁽⁹³⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 37, to the patriarch Lord John, lines 73ff (Hero, 135).

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Akindynos, *Letter* 62. 26–9 (Hero, 250–2).

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 85 (Sinkewicz, 182–4; Perrella III, 96–8); cf. Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 5, 641D–644A; II, 11, 649B; II, 11, 652A.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 72 (Sinkewicz, 166; Perrella III, 82).

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 134 (Sinkewicz, 238; Perrella III, 148–50).

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Ibid.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 126 (Sinkewicz, 228–30; Perrella III, 140); Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy* IV, 1, 177C (Heil and Ritter, 20).

(¹⁰⁰) Palamas, *150 Chapters* 72 (Sinkewicz, 166–8; Perrella III, 82).

(¹⁰¹) Palamas, *150 Chapters* 105 (Sinkewicz, 200; Perrella III, 112).

(¹⁰²) Plato, *Republic* VI, 509b.

(¹⁰³) Stead, *Divine Substance*, 27.

(¹⁰⁴) Daniel, metropolitan of the port of Ainos, a fortress on the east bank of the Hebros river in Thrace, had signed the Hagioritic Tome in 1340, but added his signature to the Tome of 1347 only in July, later than most other bishops.

(¹⁰⁵) Palamas, *Letter to Daniel of Ainos* 10 (Christou II, 383; Perrella III, 732).

(¹⁰⁶) Most scholars, even those sympathetic to Palamas (e.g. Bradshaw, *East and West*, 242), believe that Palamas does not relate his teaching on essence and energies to traditional Trinitarian doctrine. The evidence for a carefully worked out relationship is there if they will look beyond the text of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* and the selections from the *Triads* that have been translated into English.

(¹⁰⁷) Maximus the Confessor, *Opuscula theologica et polemica, ad Marinum*, PG 91, 109A.

(¹⁰⁸) Ps.-Gregory of Nyssa, *Liber de cognitione dei*, from Euthymios Zigabenos, *Panoplia dogmatica*, PG 130, 268CD.

(¹⁰⁹) Palamas, *Letter to Daniel of Ainos* 10 (Christou II, 384; Perrella III, 732–4).

(¹¹⁰) *Synodal Tome* of 1351, § 9 (ed. Karmiris, *Monumenta Orthodoxae Ecclesiae*, 379–80).

(¹¹¹) Cf. Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 23 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 159–61; Perrella I, 412) (the Church's teachers, according to Dionysius, said that θεότης is the θεοποιὸς χάρις coming from God); Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 8 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 571; Perrella I, 782) (Maximus calls this θεότης 'θέωσις').

(¹¹²) The most thorough treatment is in Demetracopoulos, 'Palamas Transformed'.

(¹¹³) Norman Russell, 'The Christological Context of Palamas' Approach to Participation in God', in Athanasopoulos, *Triune God*, 190–8.

(¹¹⁴) On this whole topic, see Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*.

(¹¹⁵) Prochoros Kydones, *On Essence and Energies* VI, 9 (ed. Candal, 270. 1–9).

(¹¹⁶) *Synodal Tome* of 1368 (ed. Rigo, 109. 275–91).

(¹¹⁷) Prochoros is drawing here on Dionysius, *Divine Names* XII, 4, 972B (Suchla, 225–6), where Dionysius says that the unparticipated cause transcends all participators and all participations.

(¹¹⁸) The commission was headed by Theophanes of Nicaea, who was himself to make use of Aquinas in his refutation of Prochoros. See Ioannis D. Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea: His Life and Works* (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), esp. 87–109.

(¹¹⁹) *Synodal Tome* of 1368 (ed. Rigo, 107. 236–43). The chapter headings are from Prochoros Kydones, *On Essence and Energies* II, 10, 11, 15, 16, and 17.

(¹²⁰) See Polemis, *Theophanes of Nicaea*, 74–8.

(¹²¹) Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 119. The title of Chrysoberges' work is *Apodictic Exposition from the Writings of the Most Blessed Thomas concerning the Divine Essence and Energy*, published by E. Candal (ed.), 'Andreae Rhodiensis, OP, inedita ad Bessarionem epistula', *OCP* 4 (1938), 329–70.

(¹²²) Endre von Ivánka, 'Palamismus und Vätertradition', in *L'Église et les églises. Études et travaux sur l'Unité chrétienne offerts à Dom Lambert Beaudouin* (Chevetogne, 1955), vol. 2, 29–46; Jean-Philippe Houdret, 'Palamas et les Cappadociens'.

(¹²³) Georgios Martzelos, Οὐσία καὶ ἐνέργεια ¶, 13–14, 98; Georgios Martzelos, 'The Significance of the Distinction between the Essence and Energies of God according to St. Basil the Great', in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 149–57.

(¹²⁴) Dorothea Wendebourg, *Geist oder Energie? Zur Frage der innergöttlichen Verankerung des christlichen Lebens in der byzantinischen Theologie* (Munich: Beck, 1980), 10, 199–200, 242–3; cf. the critique of Wendebourg by Martzelos, Οὐσία καὶ ἐνέργεια¶, 117–18.

(¹²⁵) Mascall, *The Openness of Being*, Appendix III, 'Grace and Nature in East and West'.

(¹²⁶) Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 164–72.

(¹²⁷) Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 2–3, 186–200.

(¹²⁸) Mascall, *Openness of Being*, 228.

(¹²⁹) For details, see Russell, 'Prochoros Kydones and the fourteenth-century understanding of Orthodoxy'.

(¹³⁰) For more on these developments, see Russell, 'Palamism and the Circle of Demetrius Kydones'.

(¹³¹) Williams, 'The Philosophical Structures of Palamism'.

(¹³²) Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for us: the Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991).

(¹³³) John Milbank, 'Sophiology and Theurgy: The New Theological Horizon', in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, 45–90; John Milbank, 'Christianity and Platonism in East and West', in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 158–209.

What is the reality of divine–human communion?

The nature of divine–human communion became the central issue in the hesychast controversy after Barlaam published his *Against the Messalians* in the winter of 1339–1340, in which he accuses the hesychasts of being crypto-Bogomils. This was a serious charge and it did not lack plausibility. Palamas responded with alacrity, issuing in the spring or summer of 1340 the third of his *Triads* and also drawing up an official *Hagioretic Tome* which was signed by a number of senior monks, including the Protos of the Holy Mountain and the bishop of Ierissos, the ordinary of Mount Athos.

Barlaam's accusation led to the arraignment of Palamas at the council of 1341. After considering patristic teaching on the Transfiguration, the attainment of deification by participation in divine grace, and the practice of the Jesus Prayer, the council found against the plaintiff, declaring the monks innocent of the charge Barlaam had brought against them. Yet although the *Synodal Tome* subsequently published by the patriarch John Kalekas forbade any further discussion of these and other dogmatic matters, much of the theological debate for the next ten years focused precisely on these issues.

The position Palamas set out in the *Hagioretic Tome* was one from which he never wavered. The union that one may attain with God depends not on conforming one's will to God through the practice of virtue but on the gift of grace, which is nothing less than God's gift of himself:

Whoever declares that perfect union with God can be attained by imitation and relationship alone (μόνη τῇ μιμήσει τε καὶ σχέσει) without the deifying grace of the Spirit, like people of the same character who are also loved by one another, and that the deifying grace of God is a habit (ἔξις) of rational nature which is attained through imitation alone, but is not a supernatural illumination and an ineffable divine energy which is invisibly seen and incomprehensibly conceived by those deemed worthy, let that man know that he has fallen without knowing it into the deceit of the Messalians. For someone who is deified will by all necessity be a god (p.190) by nature, if deification (θεώσις) takes place by a natural power and is naturally encompassed by the bounds of nature.¹

This passage, seeking as it does to exclude a merely moral sense of the imitation of God centred on the training of the will, encapsulates the mainstream patristic—especially the Maximian—teaching on deification.² In his *Against the Messalians*, Barlaam had evidently spoken of grace in terms of a created ἔξις or *habitus*.³ For Palamas' grace was much more than that. It was a signifier with a rich range of meanings in patristic literature. These had hitherto not been discussed. It was now time to do so.

What is Grace?

When the leadership of the anti-Palamite faction was assumed by Akindynos after Barlaam's departure from Constantinople, Athanasios of Kyzikos wrote to Palamas, asking him to clarify the difference between the two men. In his reply (1343–1344), Palamas discusses at some length the different meanings of the word 'grace' (χάρις).⁴ First he distinguishes between uncreated grace and created grace, the former being the giving of the gift (τὸ δωρεὰν δίδοσθαι) and the latter the gift as received (τὸ δωρεὰν διδόμενον). Sometimes, however, grace is neither the thing given (τὸ δόμα) nor the act of giving it, but is the splendour of the

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that is manifested in those who are deemed worthy of deification. Besides these divine senses of grace, there is also a natural grace, which is the physical beauty, comeliness, and splendour of each nature, or the intellectual beauty of the mind.

The problem with Akindynos, says Palamas, is that he cannot distinguish between these different senses of grace. He treats every kind of grace as created and accuses those who disagree with him of ditheism. But there is no natural contiguity between the creature and the Creator. When Akindynos makes the outpouring of grace on the saints a creature, he destroys their communion with the divine. From Akindynos' writings, Palamas picks out the following (p.191) statement as illustrative of the error which results from confusing the giving with the gift:

The hypostasis of the All-holy Spirit creates deifying grace in the saints, and as a result this created grace is said to be a hypostasis of the All-holy Spirit; and those who have received this created grace are said to have received the Holy Spirit, the essence and hypostasis itself of the Spirit.⁵

‘But what is there in every being that has not been created by the All-holy Spirit?’ asks Palamas. Yet all beings have not received the outpouring of the Spirit, which is what Akindynos' statement entails. Moreover, to say that the saints have received the essence and hypostasis of the Spirit is blasphemously to make them divine in their essential being—ὁμόθεοι and ὁμότιμοι with Christ.

Palamas bases these remarks on his distinction between passive participation in God (God as causal principle) and active participation in him (sharing in divine energy—here in the outpouring of the Spirit), which Akindynos fails to make. But it is difficult to support his conclusions (reached by *reductio ad absurdum*) from Akindynos' independently surviving writings. In his refutation of Palamas' *Dialogue* Akindynos does indeed maintain that grace is created because of ‘the economy of the Incarnation, which is grace and is called a “new creation” by the Apostle and the great Athanasius’.⁶ He grants that there exists an uncreated grace common to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but this is the divine essence itself. As grace-in-itself (αὐτοχάρις), uncreated grace is different from the graces that are accessible to the senses, like the saving blood of Christ and other created gifts. Elsewhere the ‘deifying gift’ is the fruit of the operation (ἐνέργημα not ἐνέργεια) of the Spirit.⁷ There is no grace or energy or glory that is ἀνούσιος, that does not belong to the essence.⁸ It is therefore unacceptable to call the deifying grace of the All-holy Spirit ‘divinity’, as Palamas does, and not only divinity but ‘uncreated divinity’.⁹ These assertions make it unlikely that Akindynos would have really claimed that the recipients of grace receive the essence and hypostasis of the Holy Spirit, as Palamas maintains. Palamas highlights the unacceptable consequences of saying that the experience of grace is the experience of the Holy Spirit himself when a distinction is not also made between essence and energy. But Akindynos approaches the question differently. For him all experience of grace is the experience of a created effect of the Holy Spirit or of the incarnate Christ.

(p.192) Palamas' chief guide to the doctrine of grace is Dionysius. It is from him that he borrows the phrase ‘deifying gift’ (θεοποιὸς δωρεά) to express the fundamental nature of χάρις.¹⁰ ‘And what else is the deifying gift of the Spirit,’ he asks, ‘than the Kingdom of God? For to become a god is the same as to attain the Kingdom of God.’¹¹ It follows that if the Kingdom of God is without beginning and uncreated, so too is the deifying gift that brings us into the Kingdom. This transcendent gift is different from the specific created gifts of grace (τὰ τῆς χάριτος δόματα) which are symbolized by the mantle that fell from Elijah and was

picked up by Elisha.¹² The biblical text that conveys the meaning of the former kind of grace most vividly is Joel 3:1 (MT 2:28), which is also cited by Peter in his Pentecost homily reported in Acts 2:17: ‘I shall pour out from my spirit on all flesh’. For Palamas the difference between ‘giving’ and ‘pouring out’ is highly significant. ‘Giving’ suggests a discrete quantity; ‘pouring out’ is unlimited. The distinction comes from John Chrysostom’s exegesis of the second verse of Psalm 44 (MT 45), ‘grace has been poured upon your lips’, an exegesis which Palamas is fond of quoting.¹³ For Palamas, Chrysostom puts Dionysius’ ‘deifying gift’ in its biblical context.

Even before his dispute with Barlaam, Palamas had found Chrysostom a valuable source of testimonies to the manner in which the Spirit is given. In his apodictic treatises *Against the Latins* (1335) he appeals to Chrysostom on several occasions to demonstrate how the difference between Spirit’s being (*ousia*) and the Spirit’s activity (*energeia*) is reflected in the fact that the Spirit is ‘poured out’ (Joel 3:1) ‘without measure’ (John 3:34). As Chrysostom emphasizes, the Paraclete is not divided—and we should note, adds Palamas, that the text of Joel 3:1 says not ‘I shall pour out my Spirit’ but ‘I shall pour out *from* my Spirit’ (ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου). What is given is the Spirit in a derivative sense, yet what is derived from him is not something less than the Spirit himself.¹⁴ Later in his *Apologia* (1341), Palamas brings John 1:16 into play: ‘From his fullness we have all received’. Again Palamas wants us to note the word ‘from’ (in this case, ἐκ). The ‘fullness’ (πλήρωμα) *from which* we have all received is self-evidently not a creature (κτίσμα), therefore neither is *what* we have received a creature.¹⁵ Palamas comes back to the same point several times in his *Antirrhethics against Akindynos* (1343–1344), usually with reference to Joel 3:1, as commented on by Chrysostom. The grace that is apportioned (μεριζομένη) to believers cannot (p.193) be the *ousia* of the Spirit, because the *ousia* is indivisible. Grace therefore has two senses: It is both the uncreated *outpouring* from the Spirit and the *giving* of the created gift.¹⁶

How is Grace Appropriated?

The chief way in which grace is appropriated is through the imitation of Christ. Palamas is anxious to exclude any idea of an external imitation, or imitation ‘by nature’, which is what he believes Barlaam’s position entails.¹⁷ Dionysius, he says, speaks of two modes by which we become conformed to God: by the deifying gift (θεοποιὸν δῶρον) and by a non-imitating imitation (ἀμίμητον μίμημα).¹⁸ Imitation is simultaneously affirmed and negated by Dionysius because it is impossible for us to become like God by our own efforts. Such non-imitating imitation is equivalent to the grace of deification (ἡ τῆς θεώσεως χάρις), which is a divine, not a human, activity, an *energeia* that is inseparable from the divine *ousia*.¹⁹ Yet we are not simply passive recipients of deifying grace. We have to prepare ourselves for it actively by effort and study, which opens us up to wisdom.²⁰ Imitation, although properly speaking non-imitation, is from the human point of view a mark of active cooperation with the divine.

In his ascetical writings, Palamas constantly emphasizes the need to discipline both the body and the mind in order to create the conditions conducive to union with God. It is not enough simply to acquire the habit of study. In his *Epistolary Treatise to the Philosophers John and Theodore*, Palamas urges his respondents to regard Christ as the true philosophy, as wisdom-in-itself. The cultivation of the virtues is a vital accompaniment to the intellectual life if the mind is to ‘return to itself’ and attain its proper integrity.²¹ In this task the utmost vigilance is

needed, especially among monastics, because even prayer and the pursuit of virtue can become self-regarding if they are not accompanied by the love of God.²² Nor are the married laity dispensed from self-discipline; it may not be as severe as that expected of monastics, but it is none the less real. In the homilies that Palamas delivered as metropolitan of Thessaloniki, he (p.194) emphasizes the obligatory nature of fasting, prayer and personal asceticism but he is careful to set it within the context of a teaching on the spiritual life that makes the vision of God the goal for every Christian.²³

The theological anthropology that lies behind this teaching makes use of the common patristic distinction between image and likeness. Humanity, which was created ‘in the image’ and ‘according to the likeness’ of God, as Genesis 1:26 puts it, lost its likeness to God as a result of the Fall but retained the divine image. In his *Letter to the Nun Xene* Palamas adapts a passage from the fifth-century bishop, Diadochus of Photice, which expresses this relationship in a vivid manner:

Holy grace confers two things on us by baptism, one of which infinitely transcends the other. For it renews us in the water and brightens up what is in the image, washing away from us every wrinkle of sin. But the other is received so that it might work with us. When the mind begins to taste the goodness of the all-holy Spirit with full consciousness, we should then know that grace is beginning, as it were, to paint the likeness over the image, with the result that this consciousness shows us to have been conformed to the likeness, but we shall know the perfection of the likeness by the illumination.²⁴

For it to fulfil more than its basic function in baptismal cleansing and renewal, grace requires the cooperation of our wills. Drawing on Evagrius Ponticus (whom he knows under the name of Nilus), Palamas describes the illumination that brings knowledge of the perfection of the likeness as the experience in prayer of a sky-blue noetic light which is cognate (συγγενές) with God.²⁵ When defending such experience of grace against Barlaam, who brands it a product of the imagination (φαντασίαν ... τὸ εἶδωλον ἐν ἑαυτῇ τῆς καρδίας φέρουσιν), Palamas describes it, like John Climacus, as a spiritual joy which descends from the mind into the body, transforming the body into spirit in accordance with Christ’s saying, ‘what is born of the Spirit is spirit’ (John 3:6).²⁶ When writing to the nun Xene, however, he joins this to the language of the nuptial mysticism characteristic of Gregory of Nyssa:

This, then, is the profit gained from mourning (πένθος), which is painful insofar as it is joined to the fear of God. But as it continues, it becomes wonderfully united with the love of God and bears the fruit of sweet and holy consolation, when the goodness of the Paraclete is tasted by one who has acquired the quality of mourning. (p.195) For those who have not experienced this, it is almost unheard of because it is inexpressible. For if no one can convey the sweetness of honey to someone who has not tasted it, how can anyone describe the pleasure of the holy joy and grace that comes from God to those who have not experienced it? Moreover, the beginning of mourning resembles some kind of quest for betrothal with God, which seems impossible. As a result, words proposing, as it were, a betrothal are addressed to the as yet unengaged Bridegroom by those who mourn on account of their desire, smiting themselves and calling on him with loud wails, as one who is not present and perhaps will not make himself present. But the end of mourning is a perfect bridal union in chastity.²⁷

Such is the experience of the saints. Nobody, Palamas comments, could say that the grace dwelling in them is created.²⁸ But what of those who are not saints and not even monastics? They may not be able to reach the heights attained by those who have embraced the

hesychastic life, but they are not thereby deprived of grace. Even union with the Bridegroom can be theirs, although for them it is to be experienced as an eschatological fulfilment.²⁹

The appropriation of grace by the ordinary Christian faithful became a matter of concern to Palamas after his consecration as metropolitan of Thessaloniki in 1347. In his sixty-three surviving homilies and his *New Testament Decalogue* (the rule of life he wrote for the average layperson), he deploys all his rhetorical skills to encourage in his people a disposition favourable to the reception of grace. The life of laypeople is not of a different character from that of monks and nuns. Those who are capable of it should embrace the life of virginity in order to devote themselves undistractedly to God. But those who choose the married life must also live chastely in imitation not only of the angels and of the virginal mother of Christ, but also of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father without generation.³⁰ Everyone should have a spiritual father throughout their life to bring to fruition the transformation from earthly being into heavenly being that was begun at baptism.³¹ And everyone should receive the holy body and blood of Christ to prepare themselves for the reception of the eternal blessings to come.³² Fasting is important in order to orientate oneself towards this future divine glory, for it brings victory over the passions, although one must also bear in mind that ‘without me you can do nothing’ (John 15:5).³³ The veneration of icons and relics is also important, because by glorifying those (p.196) who glorified God, one will also be glorified with them.³⁴ Every aspect of Christian life should open one to the operation of grace, which is not a private enjoyment of spiritual consolation but one’s insertion into the grace-filled life of the Christian community, and then progress towards the fulfilment of divinization.³⁵

The Vision of Light

For contemplatives, however, there is another, more direct way. The person who keeps the commandments, avoids evil, and cleaves to the love of God may ascend by the practice of contemplation (θεωρία) to a vision of God—not of God’s essence but ‘by a manifestation befitting him and proportionate to him’.³⁶ The nature of this contemplative ascent occupied much of the debate between Palamas and Barlaam. In his first letter to Palamas, Barlaam suggests, in an irenic manner, that the differences between them on the nature of apodictic arguments are not all that important because they both hold that the highest knowledge comes by divine illumination from the source of intellectual and immaterial light.³⁷ Palamas disagrees. He finds Barlaam’s opinion of the nature of illumination quite different from his own. When he reads that Barlaam cannot accept that the ancient philosophers were not themselves enlightened (πεφωτισθαί) by God and so rose above the multitude, he is shocked.³⁸ Does Barlaam believe they enjoyed the vision of God?³⁹ In his reply, Barlaam protests that he has been calumniated. He was not saying that the Socrateses and the Platos of the ancient world were seers (θεόπται) in the biblical sense. He meant, as Paul testifies, that they had the possibility of knowing God.⁴⁰ Barlaam seems to be less than frank here. He must have known that the term he had used, φωτίζω, carried a deep significance in the mystical tradition in general, and in Dionysius in particular.

Palamas rightly discerned early in the debate that he and Barlaam had different conceptions of the apophatic approach to the knowledge of God. He complains to Barlaam that his reliance on the ancient philosophers leads him to claim that (p.197) the divine transcendence may be comprehended by the human mind.⁴¹ Barlaam responds by saying that the expression ‘to comprehend the divine transcendence’ has two meanings. The meaning he intends is that the human mind may comprehend the *fact* that the divine is transcendent, but it may not

comprehend the *content* of divine transcendence.⁴² Indeed, the ancient philosophers together with the great Dionysius in the last chapter of his *Mystical Theology* are united in emphasizing the utter transcendence of the divine, which is beyond everything that may be either asserted or denied.⁴³ Barlaam's radical way of negation, however, although supported by the Platonic tradition, leaves him with a divinity devoid of any predicable attribute that enables it to be 'seen'. Palamas comments on this in the third of his first series of *Triads*. 'One sees,' he says, 'not in a negative way—for one *does* see something—but in a manner superior to negation. For God is not only beyond knowledge, but also beyond unknowing.'⁴⁴ This manner of seeing 'something' does not depend on the activity of the intellect because in that case it would be a product of the human will. All that the process of abstraction does is to predispose us to being receptive to the operation of the Holy Spirit by whom we see what we see. As a result, Palamas is able to define contemplation in an affirmative sense as something that is fundamentally a divine action:

Contemplation (θεωρία), then, is not simply abstraction and negation; it is a union and a divinization which occurs mystically and ineffably by the grace of God, after the stripping away of everything from here below which imprints itself on the mind, or rather after the cessation of all intellectual activity; it is something which goes beyond abstraction (which is only the outward mark of the cessation).⁴⁵

Barlaam does not dispute that contemplation in its highest form is a divine gift, but he thinks of it, to put it in Palamas' terms, as something that is given (τὸ δωρεὰν διδόμενον) rather than as the act of giving itself (τὸ δωρεὰν δίδοσθαι):

For I, like you and all who have been found worthy of the same grace, admit that the apostles and prophets and anyone who has become like them have been granted a vision from on high and have received an intellectual light, through which they have received the *logoi* of providence in a manner superior to apodictic proof, and have been raised to contemplations that are simple and undivided, as a result of which I consider them skilled theologians.⁴⁶

(p.198) But the illumination that is the fruit of contemplation is only a metaphorical way of speaking about human knowledge as a result of the bestowal of grace:

If anyone calls 'illumination' in a figurative sense (ἐλλαμπιν τροπικῶς) the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, will, understanding, and such things, which God gives to the worthy, it is only this illumination that I would desire and wish to possess. As for those illuminations which are spoken of, or occur, differently, and are given to souls in a manner other than the way I have already mentioned, I am not in the least attracted to them. For I consider it of no profit at all for a foolish soul, infected with forgetfulness, error, ignorance, and senseless opinions to cohabit with light and be mingled with it when it has not purified itself of the passions I have just mentioned and has not instilled in itself knowledge of the processions of the One into the things that are.⁴⁷

So much for the hesychasts—in Barlaam's view, a deluded bunch if there ever was one, steeped in ignorance and error.⁴⁸

For Palamas the contemplation of God is not a form of knowledge, or rather, it is knowledge in a transcendent sense because it depends on the indwelling and manifestation of God.⁴⁹ In reply to Barlaam, he devotes the longest treatise of the *Triads*, the third of the second series, specifically to the nature of the hesychast's contemplation of the divine light. This treatise is in effect an extended commentary on a section of the *Divine Names* (the fourth of the first

book), which Alexander Golitzin has called the key to the entire Dionysian corpus.⁵⁰ Dionysius' text runs as follows:

We shall ... be filled, on the one hand, with pure contemplation of His most visible theophany, shining around us with manifest brilliance as it shone round His disciples at the divine Transfiguration, and, on the other hand, we shall [also] participate in His noetic gift of light with our intellects grown passionless and immaterial; and [finally we shall share] in the union which transcends the [created] intellect through the unknowable and blessed impulses of [His] supra-luminary rays in a more divine imitation of the heavenly intellects because, as Scripture says, 'we shall be equals to the angels and sons of God, being sons of the Resurrection.'⁵¹

Palamas analyses this text in terms of Paul's 'now' (νῦν) and 'then' (τότε) (1 Corinthians 13:12–13). Now we see these things in partial symbols; then we shall see the light like the disciples at the Transfiguration.⁵² Now we see corporeally (by the senses) and noetically (by the intellect); then we shall see in a manner that transcends both the senses and the intellect. There is a strong (p.199) continuity between the 'now' and the 'then', for in both cases we experience the divine light in our corporeal nature. On the one hand, according to Dionysius, the divine light is now in part accessible to the senses, although as a divine gift it cannot be forced by our own efforts;⁵³ on the other, as Maximus testifies, 'the Spirit then will grant us through deification the cessation of all the natural operations of the body and the intellect, so that God will be made manifest through the soul and the body'.⁵⁴ The ultimate stage of contemplation is thus attained not through intellectual abstraction but through the transformative effect on both body and soul of the superabundance of divine glory.

Enhypostatic Existence

In the first treatise of the next *Triad*, Palamas devotes an important paragraph to explaining his use of the terms 'authypostatic', 'enhypostatic', and 'anhypostatic' because he believes that Balaam's misunderstanding of the use of these terms, especially 'enhypostatic' (ἐνυπόστατον), has been the cause of much confusion.⁵⁵ Palamas acknowledges that in his previous treatise he had often used the expression 'enhypostatic light' to refer to 'the foretaste of the future promise, the grace of adoption, the deifying gift of the Spirit'.⁵⁶ This light is 'enhypostatic', rather than 'authypostatic', because it does not exist independently, 'but the Spirit sends it out into the hypostasis of another, in which it is also contemplated'.⁵⁷ He explains what he means by this a few paragraphs later:

By this term [ἐνυπόστατον] they [the saints] testify that this [light] is not independently subsistent (αὐθυπόστατον), which is also manifest from their never saying that it exists in its own hypostasis, as we have also already stated elsewhere,⁵⁸ and is even more manifest as a result of the distinction we have proposed. For what is said to be anhypostatic is not only that which is not-existent (τὸ μὴ ὄν), nor is it only that which is a mental image (τὸ φάσμα), but it is also that which quickly fades and passes, which disintegrates and rapidly ceases to be, like the nature of lightning and thunder, or indeed our own speech and thought. To indicate the permanence and stability of that light they [the saints] have rightly called it enhypostatic, in that it persists and does not disappear from sight of the beholders like lightning or speech or thought.⁵⁹

(p.200) The word 'enhypostatic' has a complex history.⁶⁰ Originally it meant 'having a concrete existence', or simply 'real'. It was first brought into Christological discussion in the

early sixth century by John of Caesarea, who responds to Severus of Antioch's miaphysite arguments in his *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*.⁶¹ 'Enhypostatic' had been used in the fourth-century Trinitarian controversies, but it was only with John of Caesarea that the 'en-' prefix begins to acquire a localizing sense: 'Although the term *enhypostatos* in John's usage primarily means "having a concrete existence", it is implied that a common nature or substance always exists as being individualized in a hypostasis.'⁶² A little later, Leontius of Jerusalem speaks of Christ's two natures as being ἐνυπόστατοι, affirming that they exist in a concrete sense but also implying that 'the two natures exist *in* one and the same hypostasis'.⁶³ The first to make this localizing sense explicit in quite an original way is John of Damascus (c.655–c.750). For Damascene, 'a nature that has been taken up *by* another hypostasis and has its existence *in* it is called *enhypostatos*'.⁶⁴ In the Christological context, the flesh of Christ is enhypostasized, or localized, in the eternal hypostasis of the Logos, rather like the flame of a lamp is enhypostasized in a wick.

Palamas draws on Damascene and, with the help of Maximus the Confessor, makes a further adaptation of his own. Moving away from the original Christological context, he applies *enhypostatos* to any permanent reality that is taken up by another hypostasis. The divine light, as an energy or θεότης, has no hypostasis of its own. But it is not therefore without existence independent of our minds, nor does it lack stability. Barlaam protests strongly at what he regards as metaphysical nonsense: 'Now we are discussing what some call enhypostatic light, without first expressing our own opinion, which is that what they say they see as noetic and immaterial is light in its own hypostasis.'⁶⁵ Palamas responds by appealing to Macarius the Great and Maximus the Confessor, who state, he says, that the light exists but not in its own hypostasis.⁶⁶

(p.201)

Even if the hesychasts call the light of grace 'noetic', they do not do so in the proper sense, for they know that it transcends the intellect, because it is only produced in the intellect by the power of the Spirit on the cessation of all intellectual activity.⁶⁷

In his discourses *Against Gregoras*, Palamas emphasizes the same point, citing again the same text from Maximus the Confessor.⁶⁸ Arguing against Gregoras' contention that theosis is a product of the human mind, he insists that it is an 'enhypostatic illumination' which is neither authypostatic ('for no one is inserted into the hypostasis and substance of the Lord'), nor anhypostatic like thunder and lightning, but subsists permanently in those who have been endowed with grace. Theosis is real but, by virtue of being an energy, does not subsist independently of the deified as an essence.

The Nature of Symbols

Barlaam, like Gregoras, could not accept that the contemplation defended by Palamas was a vision of any external reality. At best, it was the contemplation of products of the mind (εἰδωλά). In response, Palamas found himself obliged to investigate the meaning of symbol. In his first *Triad* (spring 1338) he was content to make a somewhat arbitrary distinction between the symbolic nature of the Old Testament theophanies and the reality of Christ's theophany on Mount Tabor.⁶⁹ In this scheme, Stephen's vision at his martyrdom (Acts 7:56) fell between the two, because the vision itself was real but the scene which Stephen saw—Jesus at the right hand of God—was symbolic.⁷⁰ By the time he came to write the second *Triad*, however (spring–summer 1339), he needed, in response to his opponents' continued insistence that all the lights shown to the saints were mentally constructed

symbolic images (συμβολικὰ φάσματα),⁷¹ to consider the question more deeply. He now took a more positive view of symbol, having studied what Maximus the Confessor had to say about the Transfiguration in the *Ambigua*.⁷² For Maximus, ‘wise in divine matters, called the light of the Lord in the Transfiguration “a symbol of theology” (p.202) analogically and anagogically’.⁷³ What Palamas learned from Maximus was that there are two kinds of symbol that correspond to two modes of theology. The first kind (corresponding to apophatic theology) transcends the senses and leads us up to the truth that transcends reason and the intellect; the second kind (corresponding to cataphatic theology) enables us to form conjectures about God by deductive reasoning. The Transfiguration is symbolic in the first sense, for the symbols correspond to realities external to the mind. That is why Maximus, says Palamas, can make the word ‘symbol’ equivalent to ‘contemplation’.⁷⁴ The symbolic in this sense is not an image we have constructed in our own minds, but the road to reality.

In this same treatise on divine light (*Triads* II, 3), Palamas also considers Moses’ ascent of Mount Sinai to meet God in the darkness of the cloud (Exodus 24:15–18), for this was regarded by all parties as the Old Testament counterpart to the theophany on Mount Tabor. Barlaam had appealed to the authority of Dionysius to argue that ‘the mystical darkness’ encountered by Moses on Sinai was symbolic of radical unknowing (τὸ μηδαμῇ μηδὲν ὁρᾶν).⁷⁵ Palamas quotes the same text back at him more fully to show that the darkness, far from being the darkness of nothingness, was the result of the dazzling intensity of light that Moses experienced.⁷⁶ The biblical account indicates the presence, not the absence, of God. Certainly, the tabernacle and all its equipment that Moses was shown on Sinai (Exodus 25–7) were symbols, but the vision itself was not a symbol in the sense in which Barlaam understands the term.⁷⁷

Palamas returns to the topic of symbols in his antirrhetics *Against Akindynos* (1343–1344). Confident now about the distinction Maximus had made between symbols that transcend the senses and those that do not, he combines it with a distinction from Gregory of Nyssa between ‘natural’ and ‘non-natural’ symbols.⁷⁸ The latter are conventional, like the beacon that signals the approach of the enemy; the former are never separate from what they signify, like the first gleam of dawn that heralds the approach of daylight. Thus the symbolic light of the Transfiguration does not exclude the reality it represents. Indeed, it should be considered a symbol of itself, not of something other than itself.⁷⁹

ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ ΘΕΩΣΕΩΣ: The Nature of Divine–Human Communion

(p.203) ‘What then is the nature of our dispute with Barlaam?’ The question was posed by Palamas after his vindication by the council of 1347 and his elevation to the episcopate. His reply is that it concerns the ontological character of grace:

What the dispute is about is that we, in unison with the saints, say that this deifying grace and gift of the Holy Spirit, which the saints also call ‘divinity’, is uncreated, in that it unites those who have been deemed worthy with God, thus divinizing (θεουργοῦσαν) them, but is not itself separated from God, whereas Barlaam madly says that it is created, tearing it away impiously from the uncreated divinity.⁸⁰

Thus for Palamas the main issue concerns the nature of grace as a divine operation, as an uncreated giving rather than a created gift. He takes it for granted that if grace is merely created we can have no communion with God, for to have communion with God means to share in attributes that belong properly to him alone: immortality, holiness, divinity, and so

forth. This is an argument that goes back to the great age of the Fathers. Athanasius had argued for the divinity of the Holy Spirit on the grounds that he was able to make the baptized partakers of the divine Son.⁸¹ Cyril of Alexandria had claimed similarly that the Holy Spirit's divinity was proved by his ability to endow believers with the attributes of God.⁸² Palamas extends the same argument to the *operation* of the Spirit, which is grace in the primary sense. To call such grace-in-action created, he says, is 'madness'. It leads to fundamental errors in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Grace-in-action deifies. 'Are not the deifying gift and theosis the same thing?' Palamas asks.⁸³ He frequently comes back to this theme throughout his writings. In the teaching of the Fathers the main characteristics of theosis are adoption through Christ as sons and daughters of God, imitation of God so far as is possible for human beings, participation in God, and attainment of union with God. Each of these characteristics is to a greater or lesser degree woven into Palamas' discussions of how human beings reach their fulfilment in God.

The first to link deification with baptism was the second-century Father, Irenaeus of Lyon.⁸⁴ Irenaeus does not use the term itself (it had not yet been (p.204) invented), but he was the first to speak of the 'gods' of Psalm 81 (82): 6 as those who through baptism had come to share in Christ's sonship by adoption. This was to become a recurring motif in the patristic tradition and is prominent in the Fathers on whom Palamas most relies, Gregory of Nazianzus, Dionysius the Areopagite, and Maximus the Confessor. Palamas himself, however, makes comparatively little use of it even in his sermons to the people of Thessaloniki where one would expect to find it. In the first treatise of the third *Triad*, which responds to Barlaam's *Against the Messalians* and is entitled *On theosis*, he refers to 'the grace of adoption' on the authority of Maximus and Macarius as the deifying gift of the Spirit, but he does not develop the baptismal implications of the phrase.⁸⁵ In a letter addressed to the people of Thessaloniki in 1354, when he was a prisoner of the Turks, he simply urges the Thessalonians to cultivate the God-like supernatural virtues that result from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, 'for it is thus that a human being is deified'.⁸⁶

Palamas takes it for granted that baptism is a divine rebirth.⁸⁷ But it is by the imitation of God that the deification implicit in baptism becomes a reality in the life of the Christian. This too goes back to the second century,⁸⁸ coming into prominence four centuries later in Dionysius, who incorporates it into the first formal definition of deification: 'theosis is the attaining of likeness to God and union with him so far as possible.'⁸⁹ Palamas quotes this definition in order to emphasize that such imitation cannot be accomplished naturally.⁹⁰ Barlaam had argued in *Against the Messalians* that the imitation of God is a deifying gift that is an innate condition (ἐξῆς) of created rational and intelligent beings, who thus of their nature strive to attain the non-imitable imitation of God who transcends divinity and goodness.⁹¹ Palamas cannot accept that the imitation of God is an innate condition that belongs to the way in which human nature is constituted. It can only take place by the power (δύναμις) of the Spirit.⁹² Neither Palamas nor Barlaam understood imitation simply in moral terms. For both of them it signified the fruit of divine, not of human, activity. But Barlaam saw it as an innate element of created rational being, whereas Palamas held it to be a (p.205) free gift of grace. In Palamas' view, Barlaam confused the uncreated divine giving with the created possession of the gift.

Imitation, however, is only a first step: 'Without union, likeness will not be sufficient to attain theosis.'⁹³ And union requires participation. We have already considered participation from the philosophical point of view (Chapter 6). Here we need to examine how grace makes the believer a partaker of God. The key text from Scripture is 2 Peter 1:4 on how Christ's

divine promises have been given so that , having escaped from the corruption of the world , ‘you may through these become participants in the divine nature’ (ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως ἡ). This text, from the latest document to enter the New Testament canon, had not previously attracted much comment.⁹⁴ In the early 1340s, however, it came to the fore because of the apparent support it gave to the opponents of the essence–energies distinction. In the winter of 1341–1342, when he wrote his treatise *On divine and deifying participation*, Palamas had quoted a passage citing 2 Peter 1:4 from Athanasius’ first dogmatic letter to Serapion to strengthen his argument that there is a divine power at work in the world which is not a created power.⁹⁵ He does not comment at this point on the scriptural text. But by the time he came to write his dialogue *Theophanes* (early autumn 1342), he had become aware that his opponents were asserting that this text proved that the essence and nature of God was participable.⁹⁶ The question is put by the Orthodox spokesman Theophanes: how is it that the prince of the Apostles is able to say ‘that you may become participants in the divine nature’, and is supported in this by Maximus the Confessor and Gregory of Nyssa?⁹⁷ A lone biblical text might be set aside, but not one confirmed by two of the most authoritative Fathers of the Church. The converted Barlaamite Theotimos, Theophanes’ interlocutor, applauds Theophanes’ willingness to face the question squarely for the sake of truth rather than merely attempt to score a debating point. In his response, Theophanes assembles a long list of quotations from Maximus, Athanasius, Basil, and John Chrysostom to prove the truth of the proposition that God is both participable and imparticipable:

Do you see that both of these assertions have been transmitted to us by the venerable theologians, namely, that the substance of God is both imparticipable and in some way participable, and that we both participate in the divine nature and do not participate in it in any way? It is therefore necessary that we should maintain (p.206) both of these assertions and consider them an indicator of orthodox belief, and that we should reject as unorthodox and foolish those who use one of them against the other and think that each of the two refers to the same thing. For in no way should we allow anyone to think in any way that the saints contradict each other, especially in matters of such importance, knowing that this opinion, that there is a contradiction, belongs truly to men of meagre knowledge.⁹⁸

Palamas, it should be noted, is not advocating an ‘antinomic’ position here. The statements ‘God is imparticipable’ and ‘God is participable’ are both true because each has a different referent, as Theophanes makes clear in response to the next question, ‘How then can both be true?’ Peter, says Theophanes, is speaking in his epistle about the gift given to us through which we become partakers of the divine nature. Maximus teaches that we were created in the first place specifically that we might become partakers of the divine nature.⁹⁹ In both cases, Peter and Maximus are referring to participation in a divine gift which is distinct from the divine essence itself on analogy with Paul’s exhortation, ‘Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ’ (1 Corinthians 11:1).¹⁰⁰ Participation in the divine nature is thus through God’s gift of himself in his uncreated grace.

Akindynos responds to this in the third treatise of his *Refutation of the Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Palamite*.¹⁰¹ Maximus’ statement seems to him a piece of rhetorical hyperbole. The other Fathers simply say that we are partakers of the divine nature, meaning by this that we are purified and deified; Maximus goes further, saying that the very purpose of our creation was that we should become partakers of the divine nature. In Akindynos’ view, he would not have expressed himself in the way he did if the divine nature was not in fact participable. Palamas, it seems to him, will not accept the plain sense of this because of his crowd of divinities, and so interprets the texts perversely to accommodate his own ideas.

Akindynos himself does not find the participation in the divine essence problematic. It is clear, he says, that

something is said to be participated essentially when the nature itself of the participated either transforms the nature of the participant into itself, or is itself altered and changed into the nature of the participant and becomes its essential and natural food like physical food for those who are nourished. Or again, when the nature of the essence itself of the participated either comes to be perceived in itself by a sense, or several of the senses, or all of them together, and enters into communion with them by commingling, like life in relation to living beings, order (p.207) in relation to ordered beings, beauty in relation to beautiful beings, likeness in relation to like beings and contrariety in relation to contrary beings.¹⁰²

Akindynos will grant that the divinity ‘in some obscure fashion’ is imparticipable by nature, but insists that because the divine essence exercises its creative, conserving, providential, and vivifying powers by nature, participation in these powers is participation in the divine essence itself.¹⁰³ From Palamas’ point of view, however, by not distinguishing the participable divine attributes (which are more than attributes because they are God himself in *energeia*) from the imparticipable divine *ousia* Akindynos ends up in a state of hopeless confusion.

A copy of the third treatise of Akindynos’ *Refutation of the Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Palamite* was brought to Palamas while he was under house arrest in Constantinople.¹⁰⁴ He responded to it immediately in a letter to John Gabras, a monk of the Thracian port of Ainos, who was in touch with both Palamas and Akindynos.¹⁰⁵ There he sets out as clearly as he can the principle by which a Christian can attain a union with God which is a real union yet does not compromise the divine transcendence. Following closely Dionysius’ account of God’s self-communication in his second letter to Gaius, where the Areopagite says ‘if by divinity you understand the “what” (τὸ χρῆμα) of the deifying gift by which we are deified, and this is the principle of being deified, then he who transcends all principles is beyond divinity thus described’,¹⁰⁶ Palamas argues that, granted that it is the property of the Son and the Holy Spirit to deify, if you make the ‘what’ of the deifying gift created, which is the grace of the Spirit, you turn the Son and the Spirit into creatures.¹⁰⁷ That which deifies, however, cannot be a creature. Logically, he says, there are three possibilities for deification: union with the essence; union with the energy; or union with the hypostasis. Essential union, a merging of the divine and human substances, is out of the question and unsupported by any patristic tradition. Hypostatic union is exclusively the property of the Son, who united himself with the human nature that he assumed. ‘If each of us deified by being united to God neither by essence nor by hypostasis, what is left is necessarily that each is deified by divine grace and energy.’¹⁰⁸ In uniting himself to each of the deified, as Maximus teaches, God shows that both they and he have a single energy.¹⁰⁹ (p.208) God in his essence remains utterly transcendent, but the deified share a ‘communion of theosis’ with him through participating in his deifying energy.

Palamas’ final summary of his teaching on theosis in the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* draws together these Maximian themes:

Those who have pleased God and attained that for which they came into being, namely, divinization—for they say that it was for this purpose that God made us, in order to make us partakers of his own divinity—these then are in God since they are divinized by him and he is in them since it is he who divinizes them, Therefore, these too participate in the divine energy, though in another way, but not in the substance of God. And so the theologians maintain that ‘divinity’ is a name for the divine energy.¹¹⁰

Each phrase is carefully chosen and refers back to Palamas' earlier discussions . That our divinization (θέωσις) was the purpose for which God created us (contested by Akindynos), is drawn from Maximus' *Letter 43*.¹¹¹ To be 'in God' is to attain union with God by an activity that Dionysius called 'non-imitating imitation' (ἀμίμητον μίμημα).¹¹² We participate in the divine energy 'in another way' (τρόπον ἕτερον) because according to Maximus and others God is both participable and imparticipable.¹¹³ And that 'divinity' (θεότης) is the name of the specific power or energy of God that deifies is asserted by several Fathers, especially by Gregory of Nyssa.¹¹⁴

Conclusion

Palamas is clear that theosis is the goal of salvation for everyone, not just for a spiritual elite. Contemplatives can train themselves to be receptive to the Holy Spirit, but they do not achieve the communion of theosis simply by intellectual effort. Theosis is the consummation of grace-in-action. For we are deified neither by a created intermediary, nor by our moral achievements, nor by a process (p.209) of intellectual abstraction, but by God himself in the course of our ecclesial life. The final stage of divine-human communion is our transformation by the superabundance of divine glory.

Palamas was right to identify the core of his dispute with Barlaam as a difference in their conceptions of grace. For Barlaam grace was a created disposition towards God. For Akindynos it was participation in the divine attributes as created gifts. Palamas himself considered it vital to distinguish uncreated grace, which is the giving of the gift, from created grace, which is the gift as appropriated by us. Uncreated grace is represented by the biblical 'outpouring from the Spirit'; it is grace-in-action. If grace were merely created, we could have no communion with God, because then we would have nothing bridging the ontological divide between the Creator and the creature.

The consummation of grace-in-action is deification. Barlaam rarely mentions deification, evidently considering it a purely metaphorical term.¹¹⁵ Akindynos agrees that deification is the fulfilment of salvation but does not accept, as Palamas does, following Maximus the Confessor, that it was the purpose for which humanity was created and therefore constitutes a fundamental element of the divine economy. Akindynos' view of deification as created grace also led him, according to Palamas, into Christological difficulties with regard to the hypostatic union.¹¹⁶ Grace-in-action deifies. It expresses God's free gift of himself to the believer. Yet God also remains hidden. He is both participable and non-participable, not in any antinomic sense, but because he is both utterly transcendent as essence and intimately present to us as energy. Only in the latter mode is he accessible to us. The contemplative, as Maximus says, wholly interpenetrated by God, will become everything that God is except on the level of identity of essence.¹¹⁷

Notes:

(¹) Palamas, *Hagioritic Tome 2* (Christou II, 570; Perrella II, 1252); trans. Sinkewicz, 'Gregory Palamas', 184 (modified).

(²) For a full account of deification in Maximus, see Jean-Claude Larchet, *La divinisation de l'homme selon saint Maxime le Confesseur* (Paris: Cerf, 1996); cf. Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*, 262–95. A minority tradition interpreted deification in moral rather than ontological terms. See, for example, Eusebius of Caesarea's treatment of John 17:4 in his *Ecclesiastical Theology* 3, 18 (PG 24, 1041BC).

- ⁽³⁾ Cf. Palamas, *On divine and divinizing participation* 2 (Christou II, 138; Perrella I, 1068): ‘If the deifying gift of the Spirit in the saints is created, and as an acquired habit (ἐξῆς) or natural imitation (μίμησις τῆς φυσικῆς) at that, as he who is disturbing us goes about teaching, the saints would not come to be deified in a manner transcending nature ...’
- ⁽⁴⁾ Palamas, *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 32 (Christou II, 442; Perrella III, 840).
- ⁽⁵⁾ Palamas, *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 33 (Christou II, 443; Perrella III, 842). The source of the quotation has not been identified.
- ⁽⁶⁾ Akindynos, *Refutationes duae* I, 29. 26–8 (Nadal, 35). Akindynos is referring to 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* 2, 53 (PG 26, 257C–260A).
- ⁽⁷⁾ Akindynos, *Refutationes duae* II, 32. 28–9 (Nadal, 131).
- ⁽⁸⁾ Akindynos, *Refutationes duae* III, 71. 8–9 (Nadal, 273).
- ⁽⁹⁾ Akindynos, *Refutationes duae* IV, 1. 26–8 (Nadal, 314).
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ Dionysius the Areopagite, *Divine Names* XI, 6 (Suchla, 223. 7).
- ⁽¹¹⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 30 (Christou II, 117; Perrella I, 1026).
- ⁽¹²⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 24 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 161–3; Perrella I, 414); cf. 4 King. 2:13 (MT 2 Kings 2:13).
- ⁽¹³⁾ John Chrysostom, *Expositio in Psalmum* 44 (PG 55, 185–6).
- ⁽¹⁴⁾ Palamas, *Against the Latins* II, 47 (Christou I, 121; Perrella I, 204) and II, 79 (Christou I, 149–50; Perrella I, 260–2). Note that the ‘from’ is lacking in the English translations of both Joel and Acts, but the author of Acts and the Fathers read ἐκχεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος μου with the Septuagint.
- ⁽¹⁵⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 35 (Christou II, 121; Perrella I, 1034).
- ⁽¹⁶⁾ Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* II, xvi, 78 (Christou III, 139–40; Perrella II, 198), V, xiv, 54 (Christou III, 327; Perrella II, 548), and V, xiv, 57 (Christou III, 329; Perrella II, 552). Gregory of Nazianzus also refers to Joel 3:1 in *Or.* 41, 13 and is cited in *Against Akindynos* V, 57 along with Chrysostom.
- ⁽¹⁷⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 25 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 605; Perrella I, 814).
- ⁽¹⁸⁾ Dionysius, *Divine Names* IX, 7, 916A (Suchla, 212. 13) and *Letters* II, 1069A (Heil and Ritter, 158. 3).
- ⁽¹⁹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 24 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 604–5; Perrella I, 814).
- ⁽²⁰⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1 28, (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 611; Perrella I, 820).
- ⁽²¹⁾ Palamas, *To the Philosophers John and Theodore* 17 (Christou V, 238; Perrella III, 318).
- ⁽²²⁾ Palamas, *To the Nun Xene* 38 (Christou V, 212; Perrella III, 268).
- ⁽²³⁾ On this topic, see Maxym Lysack, ‘Asceticism in the Homilies of Saint Gregory Palamas’, *Analogia* 3/2 (2017), 19–40.
- ⁽²⁴⁾ Palamas, *To the Nun Xene* 60 (Christou V, 224–5; Perrella III, 292), basing his metaphor on Diadochus of Photice, *Homily on Perfection* 89 (ed. Des Places, 149); cf. Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*, 246–7.

- ⁽²⁵⁾ Palamas, *To the Nun Xene* 60 (Christou V, 224; Perrella III, 292), quoting Nilus of Ancyra (i. e. Evagrius Ponticus), *On evil thoughts* 18 (PG 79, 1221B).
- ⁽²⁶⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 2, 9 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 335; Perrella I, 570); cf. Climacus, *Ladder*, Step 1 (PG 88, 633B).
- ⁽²⁷⁾ Palamas, *To the Nun Xene* 68–9 (Christou V, 229; Perrella III, 300–2); cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on the Song of Songs* (PG 44, 756–1120) and *On Virginity* (PG 46, 317–416); also Climacus, *Ladder*, Step 7, *On mourning that brings joy* (PG 88, 801–17).
- ⁽²⁸⁾ Palamas, *To the Nun Xene* 70 (Christou V, 230; Perrella III, 302).
- ⁽²⁹⁾ Palamas, *Homily* 5, 24; 18, 16
- ⁽³⁰⁾ Palamas, *Decalogue* 6 (Christou V, 257–8; Perrella III, 354–6).
- ⁽³¹⁾ Palamas, *Decalogue* 5 (Christou V, 256–7; Perrella III, 352–4).
- ⁽³²⁾ Palamas, *Decalogue* 4 (Christou V, 255; Perrella III, 350–2).
- ⁽³³⁾ Three homilies are devoted to the theme of fasting, *Homilies* 6, 7, and 9 in the corpus.
- ⁽³⁴⁾ Palamas, *Decalogue* 2 (Christou II, 253–4; Perrella III, 346–8).
- ⁽³⁵⁾ At the end of *Homily* 8 *On faith* Palamas quotes Maximus, *Questions to Thalassius* 22 (‘He who is deified by grace will become everything that God is short of identity of essence with him’), to characterize the goal for every Christian (*Hom.* VIII, 13).
- ⁽³⁶⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 4 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 113; Perrella I, 370).
- ⁽³⁷⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* I, 30 (Fyrigos, 216); cf. Palamas, *First Letter to Akindynos* 12 (Meyendorff, ‘Première lettre’, 25–6; Perrella III, 412). Barlaam makes the same assertion at the end of his second letter to Palamas, *Letter* III, 97 (Fyrigos, 368).
- ⁽³⁸⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* I, 95 (Fyrigos, 262).
- ⁽³⁹⁾ Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 35 (Christou I, 246; Perrella III, 472).
- ⁽⁴⁰⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* III, 34 (Fyrigos, 326); cf. Romans 1:19.
- ⁽⁴¹⁾ Palamas, *First Letter to Barlaam* 30 (Christou I, 242–3; Perrella III, 466).
- ⁽⁴²⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* III, 48–9, 434–50 (Fyrigos, 334–6).
- ⁽⁴³⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* III, 50, 451–7 (Fyrigos, 336). Fyrigos notes (336, n.7) that Barlaam’s references to ancient philosophers are drawn from Syrianus.
- ⁽⁴⁴⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 4 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 114–15; Perrella I, 370); trans. Nicholas Gendle, *Gregory Palamas. The Triads*. Classics of Western Spirituality (London: SPCK, 1983), 32.
- ⁽⁴⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 17 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 147; Perrella I, 400); trans. Gendle, 34–5.
- ⁽⁴⁶⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* III, 22, 221–7 (Fyrigos, 318).
- ⁽⁴⁷⁾ Barlaam, *Letter* III, 60. 559–68 (Fyrigos, 346).
- ⁽⁴⁸⁾ Fyrigos dates the beginning of hesychast polemics from this point—the end of 1334 (Fyrigos, 97).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 17 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 421–3; Perrella, I, 648–50); trans. Gendle, 61.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 29–30.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Dionysius, *Divine Names* I, 4, 592B (Suchla, 114. 7–115. 5); trans. Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 30. Palamas quotes this passage in *Triads* II, 3, 23 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 433–5; Perrella I, 660).

⁽⁵²⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 24 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 435–7; Perrella I, 660).

⁽⁵³⁾ Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* II, 3, 3, 400A (Heil, 74. 15–75. 1). Cf. Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 25 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 437; Perrella I, 662); in his usual fashion, Palamas has abbreviated the quotation.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Maximus, *Two Centuries on Theology* II, 88 (PG 90, 1168A).

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 18 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 591–3; Perrella I, 802).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 569; Perrella I, 780).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 9 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 573–5; Perrella I, 786).

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Cf. Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 9 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 573–5; Perrella I, 786).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 18 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 591; Perrella I, 802).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ For a careful study of the history of the word up to John Damascene, see U. M. Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–enhypostatos: Church Fathers, Protestant Orthodoxy and Karl Barth’, *JTS* ns 49/2 (1998), 630–57, on which this paragraph relies.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–enhypostatos’, 636.

⁽⁶²⁾ Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–enhypostatos’, 640. Lang contends that John’s ‘formula of an ἐνυπόστατος ἔνωσις’ indicates that both the divinity and the humanity of Christ exist *in* one hypostasis, namely that of the Logos, the second person of the Trinity, for they can be seen as one and the same prosopon’ (ibid.).

⁽⁶³⁾ Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–enhypostatos’, 641. As Lang points out, Brian Daley has shown, contrary to what had hitherto been the received opinion, that the other Leontius (of Byzantium) ‘does not use the term *enhypostatos* to indicate the in-existence of the human nature in the Logos’ as we find in Leontius of Jerusalem (ibid.).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–enhypostatos’, 650.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Cited by Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 397–9; Perrella I, 626–8).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Palamas is no doubt referring to Macarius, *De libertate mentis* 21, PG 34, 956A, and Maximus, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 61, scholion 14 (ed. Laga and Steel, II, 111). The scholion (perhaps by Maximus himself) comments on the phrase ἀγέννητος θεώσις as follows: ‘With “unoriginate deification” he is referring to the illumination of divinity in enhypostatic form (τὴν κατ’ εἶδος ἐνυπόστατον τῆς θεότητος ἔλλαμψιν), which has no origin but appears beyond what we can conceive of in those who are worthy of it.’

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 399; Perrella I, 628).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Palamas, *Against Gregoras* III, 20 (Christou IV, 332–3; Perrella II, 1118). This time Palamas actually reproduces the phrase ἐνυπόστατον ἔλλαμψιν from Maximus’ scholion.

- ⁽⁶⁹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 26 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 165–7; Perrella I, 418).
- ⁽⁷⁰⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 30 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 175–7; Perrella I, 426).
- ⁽⁷¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 20 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 429; Perrella I, 654).
- ⁽⁷²⁾ Cf. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* 31, PG 91, 1160C–1169B; Eng. trans. Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London: Routledge, 1996), 128–34.
- ⁽⁷³⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 21 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 431; Perrella I, 656); cf. Maximus, *Ambigua* 31, 1165D.
- ⁽⁷⁴⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 22 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 431–3; Perrella I, 658).
- ⁽⁷⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 54 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 497; Perrella I, 716); cf. Dionysius, *Letter* 5, 1073A (Ritter, 162. 6–7).
- ⁽⁷⁶⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 51 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 491; Perrella I, 711), quoting Dionysius, *Letter* 5, *To Dorotheus* 1073A (Ritter, 162. 3–8), slightly abbreviated.
- ⁽⁷⁷⁾ Palamas, *Triads* II, 3, 55–6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 501–5; Perrella I, 720–4).
- ⁽⁷⁸⁾ Palamas, *Against Akindynos* IV, v, 7 (Christou III, 246; Perrella II, 396). The text of Gregory of Nyssa he has in mind has not been identified.
- ⁽⁷⁹⁾ Palamas, *Against Akindynos* IV, v, 9 (Christou III, 248; Perrella II, 400). Perrella underlines the importance of this statement and its relevance to modern theories of the function of symbols: ‘here a path may be opened up for understanding how, notwithstanding the necessary heteroreferentiality of symbolic systems (which derives from Gödel’s theorem), it can nevertheless be possible—not only for science but also linguistically—to express a truth which is not self-referential’ (Perrella II, 401, n. 24).
- ⁽⁸⁰⁾ Palamas, *Treatise clarifying in brief the opinion of Barlaam and Akindynos* 4 (Christou IV, 88; Perrella II, 1432).
- ⁽⁸¹⁾ Athanasius, *Letter to Serapion* I, 23–4 (PG 26, 584B–588B).
- ⁽⁸²⁾ Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogues on the Trinity* VII, 644de (de Durand 3, 180); cf. Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*, 195.
- ⁽⁸³⁾ Palamas, *Apologia* 34 (Christou II, 120; Perrella I, 1032): οὐχὶ ταῦτὸν θεοποιὸν δῶρον καὶ θεωσίς ἐστιν;
- ⁽⁸⁴⁾ Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*, 106.
- ⁽⁸⁵⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 6 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 569; Perrella I, 780); again in *Triads* III, 1, 28 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 611; Perrella I, 820), quoting an unidentified passage of Maximus.
- ⁽⁸⁶⁾ Palamas, *Letter to his own church* 35 (Christou IV, 141; Perrella II, 1502).
- ⁽⁸⁷⁾ Cf. Palamas, *On divine and deifying participation* 7 (Christou II, 142–3; Perrella I, 1076–8); *Homily* XVI, 32.
- ⁽⁸⁸⁾ Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*, 128–9.
- ⁽⁸⁹⁾ Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* I, 3, 376A (Ritter, 66. 12–13). The definition is new but the association of Plato’s *Theaetetus* 176b (we should become like the divine so far as we

can) with Genesis 1:26 (humanity's creation in the image and likeness of God) was first made by Paul's contemporary, Philo of Alexandria.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Palamas, *On divine and deifying participation* 7 (Christou II, 142; Perrella I, 1076).

⁽⁹¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 25 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 605–7; Perrella I, 814); cf. *On divine and deifying participation* 2–5 (Christou II, 138–41; Perrella I, 1068–74).

⁽⁹²⁾ Palamas, *On divine and deifying participation* 7 (Christou II, 142–3; Perrella I, 1076).

⁽⁹³⁾ Ibid.: Χωρὶς δὲ τῆς ἐνώσεως ἡ ὁμοίωσις οὐκ ἀποχρήσει πρὸς θεώσιν.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ On the history of the exegesis of 2 Peter 1:4, see Norman Russell, “Partakers of the Divine Nature” (2 Peter 1:4) in the Byzantine Tradition’, in Julian Chrysostomides (ed.), *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ: Essays presented to Joan Hussey for her 80th birthday* (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1988), 51–67.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Palamas, *On divine and deifying participation* 8 (Christou II, 143; Perrella I, 1078), quoting Athanasius, *Letters to Serapion* I, 24 (PG 26, 585C–588A).

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Palamas, *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 236; Perrella I, 1266).

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Ibid., quoting Maximus, *Various texts on Theology* I, 42 (PG 90, 1193D); Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Song of Songs* 3 (PG 44, 821BC).

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Palamas, *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 238; Perrella I, 1270).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Maximus, *Letter* 43 (PG 91, 640B), reproduced in *Various texts on Theology* I, 42 (PG 90, 1193D).

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Palamas, *Theophanes* 15 (Christou II, 239; Perrella I, 1272).

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Juan Nadal Cañellas (ed.), *Gregorii Acindyni refutationes duae*, 304–5, § 90; French trans., Nadal, *La résistance d’Akindynos*, vol. 1, 333–4, § 90. Nadal dates the completion of these treatises to December 1342 or at the latest January 1343 (Nadal, ‘Gregorio Akíndinos’, 216).

⁽¹⁰²⁾ *Gregorii Acindyni refutationes duae* III §91. 1–11

⁽¹⁰³⁾ *Gregorii Acindyni refutationes duae* III §91. 65

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Palamas, *Letter to John Gabras* 2 (Christou II, 325–6; Perrella III, 624–6); cf. Sinkewicz, ‘Gregory Palamas’, 147.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ On Gabras, see Hero, *Letters of Gregory Akindynos*, 359–60. Hero dates Palamas’ letter to Gabras to between Christmas 1342 and 11 February 1343 (*Letters of Gregory Akindynos*, 357).

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Dionysius, *Letter 2 to Gaius*, 1068A–1069A (Ritter, 158. 3–6). Palamas has abbreviated the quotation.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Palamas, *Letter to John Gabras* 28 (Christou II, 355–6; Perrella III, 678).

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Palamas, *Letter to John Gabras* 29 (Christou II, 356–7; Perrella III, 680).

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Palamas, *Letter to John Gabras* 29 (Christou II, 357–8; Perrella III, 682), citing Maximus, *Ambiguum* 7, 1076C.

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Palamas, *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* 105 (trans. Sinkewicz, 201).

(¹¹¹) Cf. Palamas, *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 238; Perrella I, 1270).

(¹¹²) Cf. Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 23 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 171; Perrella I, 410–12); *Triads* III, 1, 25 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 605–7; Perrella I, 814), with reference to Dionysius, *Divine Names* IX, 7, 916A and *Letter II* to Gaius.

(¹¹³) Cf. Palamas, *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 238; Perrella I, 1270).

(¹¹⁴) Cf. Palamas, *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* II, 102 (Christou III, 157; Perrella II, 230), citing Dionysius, *Divine Names* XI, 6, 953D–956A, and Gregory of Nyssa, *On the deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit* (PG 46, 576A); cf. also Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 23 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 159–61; Perrella I, 412), citing Dionysius, *Divine Names* II, 11, 649B; Palamas, *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite* 17 (Christou II, 179–80; Perrella I, 1154), citing Gregory the Theologian, *Oration* 39, 11; Palamas, *Treatise explaining the opinions of Barlaam and Akindynos* II, xxi, 102 3 (Christou IV, 86–8; Perrella II, 1430), citing Dionysius' *Letter II* to Gaius, and referring to Maximus the Confessor, Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nyssa.

(¹¹⁵) Barlaam's single use in his letters of any of the terms referring to deification is when he uses 'deifying' as a metaphorical word for 'holy' , urging Palamas to exchange hatred for deifying love (τὴν θεοποιὸν ἀγάπην) (*Letter II*, 22. 251; Fyrigos, 294).

(¹¹⁶) Palamas, *Letter to Athanasios of Kyzikos* 24 (Christou II, 434–6; Perrella III, 826), where Palamas claims that Akindynos, like Nestorius, holds that what was conceived by Mary was subsequently deified by the divine Word.

(¹¹⁷) Maximus, *Ambiguum* 41, 1308B, cited by Palamas, *Against Gregoras* I, 25 (Christou IV, 250; Perrella II, 954).

Could Palamas become ‘the inheritance of all Christians’?

Kiprian Kern asserted many years ago that Palamas was not the end point of the development of theological thought.¹ He was right. Palamas had no intention of constructing a finished systematic theology in the manner of his Western contemporaries, even if he had known how to do it. He drew together in a creative manner a number of different strands in the Greek patristic tradition in order to counter a succession of challenges to his understanding of hesychasm, which he saw as embodying the goal of Christian teaching on the fulfilment of human life. His thinking was endorsed by the ecumenical patriarchate in a series of councils between 1341 and 1368. Opposition to it was finally silenced in the last decade of the fourteenth century,² but it never became mandatory in the way that Thomism became mandatory for Roman Catholic theologians between Leo XIII’s encyclical *Aeterni Patris* and the Second Vatican Council.³ With his development of the concepts of the energies, of the operation of uncreated grace, and of the participatory mode of divine-human communion, Palamas laid the foundations for further theological reflection. For historical reasons this was inhibited after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 until it was resumed again in Russia towards the end of the nineteenth century and was brought to the West after the Revolution of October 1917. During the twentieth century, Palamas played a significant role in the polemics between Orthodox and Western Christians, and even between different factions of the Orthodox themselves. In the twenty-first century the politics of confessional rivalry are not as prominent as they once were. We are perhaps in (p.211) a better position now to study Palamas dispassionately and bring his thinking into current theological debates.

Obstacles to the Reception of Palamas

There are still a number of obstacles, however, to embracing Palamas as a theological conversation partner. Some of these are of his own making. Many of his writings are in the form of antirrhetics, a genre that is not much to the modern taste. They rely for their effect on the demolition of the opponents’ arguments by the use of the rhetorical techniques of forensic argument, principally the technique of *reductio ad absurdum*. Barlaam complains that Palamas uses abusive language and attributes views to him that he does not hold.⁴ Akindynos protests that Palamas constantly denigrates him.⁵ Palamas himself frequently claims that he has been misrepresented.⁶ The arguments on both sides often need to be sifted carefully for their positive content.

Another obstacle is the sheer bulk of Palamas’ writings, only a small portion of which has been translated into English.⁷ In this respect, readers of Modern Greek or Italian are more fortunate. Thanks to the heroic labours of Christou, Perrella, and others the whole corpus is easily accessible to them. English-speaking scholars have tended to rely on the translations of Gendle, Sinkewicz, Rogich, and Veniamin, which although excellent give only a sample of Palamas’ (p.212) thinking. The treatises and letters written after the *Triads* provide important clarifications, and even the antirrhetics, for all their tediousness, offer frequent flashes of insight. These texts should not be neglected.

The main obstacle, however, is the polemical use which has often been made of Palamas by both pro-Palamite and anti-Palamite scholars. In many cases, this is based on the persuasive constructions of Palamism by Jugie, Lossky, or Meyendorff rather than on a first-hand

acquaintance with Palamas himself. Thus Palamas is regarded by some as the proponent of an anti-rational antinomic theology,⁸ or a teacher of higher and lower divinities,⁹ or a theologian who replaces knowledge of the divine persons with the experience of impersonal energies.¹⁰ By others, generally on the Orthodox side, he is seen as the defender of the personal experience of God in the Greek patristic tradition against the intellectualist theology of the West,¹¹ or as the champion of a charismatic monastic spirituality against the pedestrian ministrations of the diocesan clergy.¹²

In this connection it must be emphasized that Palamas himself was not notably anti-Western. Admittedly, his first works were apodictic treatises against the Latins on the procession of the Holy Spirit, but this was a normal stance for any Greek theologian, including Barlaam.¹³ In reality, Palamas was keen to commend his work to the Latins and wished to receive their response. We know that he was in touch with the Latins of Galata, on the other side of the Golden Horn from Constantinople, and that he sent copies of his works to the Master of the Hospitallers in Rhodes.¹⁴ He studied Maximos Planoudes' translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate* and made use of elements of it in his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*.¹⁵ If he had had the opportunity to see the translation of Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* that Demetrios Kydones completed at the end of 1354, we may be sure that he would have read it with interest and would have profited from it, as several of his younger disciples did. Although, of course, he took the Greek patristic tradition as normative, Palamas did not (p.213) regard himself as a peculiarly Eastern theologian; he wanted his arguments to be judged on their own merits.

Contrasting Methodologies

In order to judge Palamas' arguments on their own merits, his distinctions need to be translated into modern concepts.¹⁶ Very often Palamas' modern critics attempt to demonstrate, based on their own premises, the unacceptable conclusions entailed by his arguments—in effect applying to him the same method of *reductio ad absurdum* that he did to his own theological opponents. Sometimes contrary positions have been reached by this method. Thus it has been argued, on the one hand, that the essence–energies distinction compromises the divine simplicity,¹⁷ and on the other, that it is bluntly modalist.¹⁸ It is also often thought that the energies, lacking any Trinitarian or Christological basis,¹⁹ place an unnecessary intermediary between God and humanity, thus rendering the persons of the Trinity unknowable,²⁰ or even ‘dysfunctionalizing’ the Trinity.²¹ Palamas himself addressed some of these concerns on the relationship of the energies to the Trinity, but his statements have for the most part either been ignored or dismissed.²²

In recent years, scholars who have set themselves the task of remedying this situation have adopted one or more of the following methods: the expository, the (p.214) problematic, the antithetical, and the comparative. Authors who have expounded Palamas' thinking carefully in a non-partisan fashion include Jacques Lison,²³ Yannis Spiteris,²⁴ Stavros Yangazoglou,²⁵ Håkan Gunnarsson,²⁶ and Fadi Georgi.²⁷ The problematic method has been used to good effect by Torstein Tollefsen and Nikolaos Loudovikos, who have both contributed significantly to our understanding of Palamas' notion of participation.²⁸ Also using the problematic method, Manuel Sumares has produced interesting work on how Palamas can help us conceive of the manifestation of the transcendent in the immanent.²⁹ The antithetical method has been pursued vigorously by several Orthodox philosophers, not only by Christos Yannaras and David Bradshaw, who have sought to show that the Western

intellectualist tradition leads to metaphysical problems which can only be overcome by the adoption of a Palamite perspective,³⁰ but also by Stelios Ramfos, who takes the opposite line.³¹ Studies based on the comparative method include useful discussions by Anna Williams and Antoine Lévy of the differences and similarities between (p.215) Palamas and Aquinas,³² and also an important article by Bruce Marshall on the meaning of compatibility in a theological context.³³ Marshall offers us a convenient starting-point for a review of how these and other authors have interacted in recent debates.

Palamas in Recent Debates

Compatibility, says Marshall, occupies a fairly broad band in the spectrum between identity of meaning and bare consistency. In his comparison of Aquinas and Palamas, which focusses especially on their accounts of the action of the Holy Spirit, he finds that their respective doctrines go well beyond bare consistency. For Palamas, the Spirit's chief action is to deify. Deification is not a created effect but belongs eternally to God, with numerous cognates among the divine energies, such as 'light' and 'life'. Marshall puts it well when he says that 'Palamas' view seems to be not that the Spirit gives the uncreated energies *instead* of himself, but that he gives himself *by* giving his uncreated energies'.³⁴ Similarly, as Aquinas conceives it, "created grace" is not at all a reality interposed between the uncreated person of the Spirit and the created person in whom the Spirit dwells', inhibiting 'direct contact between the Spirit and us, but is rather the effect that the Spirit necessarily achieves in order to bring about such contact'.³⁵ Expressed in this way, Palamas' distinction between the act of giving as a free gift (τὸ δωρεὰν δίδοσθαι) and the gift itself as freely given (τὸ δωρεὰν διδόμενον) would seem on Marshall's compatibility scale to be close to identity with Aquinas' doctrine of grace.³⁶

Demonstration of compatibility, however, is not the final goal but is, in effect, a plea not to exclude Palamas from current theological debates. It is on this level that some of the most interesting discussions have been conducted.³⁷ (p.216) A thoughtful recent contribution to these is an article by David Glenn Butner, who after a careful exposition of the essence-energies distinction makes the interesting suggestion that an acceptance of the energies, properly understood, not only 'allows for a robust notion of communion as personal relationship' but can also 'help us move beyond the impasse of binary distinctions' (immanent and economic, persons and being, revelation and the God who self-reveals) by the introduction of the energies as a third term.³⁸ Butner's article is a welcome sign that Western scholars are now going beyond a merely sympathetic reading of Palamas and have begun to find elements in his thinking which can enrich their own understanding of divine-human communion.

It is naturally among Orthodox scholars that most of the work of the translation of concepts is being done. Torstein Tollefsen would like to abandon the term 'energy' altogether and translate *energeia* by 'activity' instead.³⁹ This is partly to exclude any idea that an energy is an entity in its own right, a hypostasis in addition to three persons of the Trinity. The problem here, however, is that 'activity' is rather weak as a term for God himself in action, God as perceived presence.⁴⁰ Tollefsen is fully aware, of course, that the difference between essence and energy is not the same as that between God *ad intra* and God *ad extra*. The energies are eternal, preceding any activity or operation *ad extra*. On this basis, Tollefsen offers a valuable analysis of participation as discussed by Palamas in some passages in the *One*

Hundred and Fifty Chapters.⁴¹ Arguing against Reinhard Flogaus, who holds that Palamas' notion of participation necessarily introduces a division within that which is participated,⁴² Tollefsen judges that

beings are conceived in God's eternal thought in such a way that they may be participants in divine activity to the degree that their natures are fit for such a reception, and some creatures may even make themselves fit for the reception of a more intense presence of divine activity when they move in accordance with the divine will.⁴³

Tollefsen would therefore explain the *energeiai* as a pluralization of divine activity that does not introduce divisions into the Godhead because creatures have been conceived from eternity as potential recipients of divinity: 'The one activity is pluralized in accordance with the divinely predefined receptive potentiality and capacity of creatures.'⁴⁴

(p.217) Another Orthodox scholar who has discussed Palamas in the context of modern (or rather, post-modern) thought is the philosopher Manuel Sumares. In a stimulating series of articles, he positions Palamas in relation to the post-secularist endeavour of John Milbank and others in the Radical Orthodoxy movement to re-conceptualize the relationship between the natural and the supernatural, between our created bodily reality and the reality that is uncreated and spiritual.⁴⁵ 'Post-secularism' refers to Milbank's persuasive contention that secularism does not represent humanity's coming of age.⁴⁶ The secular is not, as is often assumed, cultural space that is reclaimed as the tide of the sacred recedes from human consciousness. It is, rather, a deliberate cultural construct, an ideology with its roots in the mediaeval scholastic drive to make human reason an autonomous sphere of activity. Post-secularism thus seeks to uncover 'the religiosity that informs the modern world and the secularism that it has systematically cultivated to be its implicit expression' in order to understand it and redirect it.⁴⁷ It is in the redirection of this religiosity that Palamas, in Sumares' view, has potentially an important contribution to make.

Like Tollefsen, Sumares sees Palamas' central teaching as focussed on the capacity of creatures to receive divinity. What interests him specifically is the proposition that not only the human mind but the body too is *capax Dei*. He believes that Palamas was right to oppose Barlaam's intellectualist version of divine-human communion, a communion attained by the mind 'going out' of itself to contemplate the intelligible in the light of divine illumination for its own sake.⁴⁸ This particular 'mode of conceptualising the human quest for self-understanding' has led to the adoption in Western civilization of a 'severely truncated' view of interiority, because Western civilization has failed to comprehend 'the true reach [of] the noetic process at work in the embodied existence of human being.'⁴⁹ This process is symbolized in hesychast texts as the drawing of the mind into the heart, the work of grace affecting the whole human organism. What Palamas teaches is that the transcendent is not just 'out there' waiting to be discovered by an intellectual process but is present and at work *within* the immanent. From this, Sumares concludes:

It is precisely here that we might recognise the contemporary pertinence of Hesychasm as magnifying the dimensions of transcendental immanence: we are already within the self-giving reality of triadic divine reality operative in **(p.218)** creation; every aspect of our bodily and spiritual life is, or is called to be, consubstantial, envisioning while actualising communion beyond the dichotomies of the ages.⁵⁰

We are already within the self-giving reality of the Trinity by virtue of the Incarnation, which signals that 'the human body is *capax Dei* and, as a consequence, the human mind is enabled to participate in divine reality'. Such participation requires the 'full synergetic involvement of

the bodily powers with the *nous*, rooted in the economy of self-giving Life that descends, as it were, transcendently into human praxis, into ordinary life'.⁵¹ The transformation of the whole human person from within through the divine energies is what Palamas takes to be the meaning of theosis.

The difference between the Eastern and Western views of interiority that Sumares touches on has also been a major preoccupation of the Greek philosopher, Stelios Ramfos. In complete contrast to Sumares, however, Ramfos regards the Eastern, not the Western, version as the severely truncated one. This is because he identifies three moments of enlightenment in the later history of Greek civilization, namely the first Byzantine 'renaissance' of the tenth–eleventh century, the second Byzantine 'renaissance' of the fourteenth century, and the period of the reception of the European Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, in each of which a developing sense of the individual was stifled by the reaction of the hesychasts. The crucial period was the fourteenth century, with the chief responsibility for the failure of the Greeks to emerge from a group identity to a sense of the individual lying with Gregory Palamas.

Ramfos came to this view after have initially been impressed by Palamas' defence of hesychasm against Barlaam. In his work *Ἰλαρὸν φῶς τοῦ κόσμου* ↑ [*Gladsome Light of the World*], based on a series of lectures given in 1989–1990, he takes a wholly positive view of Palamas' arguments.⁵² He values in Palamas both his rejection of the dialectical knowledge of God through abstract concepts and his formulation of the terms on which communion by grace may be established between God and humanity.⁵³ It seems to him that in the *Triads*, Palamas gives due weight to the initiative of the embodied human person without falling into the error of anthropocentrism. Barlaam, by contrast, introduces a theory of two separate paths leading to two truths in the manner of Duns Scotus. The truth of the sensible world, which is the 'product of the reciprocal influence between the soul and the external object, from which the visible and knowable image (ἀπεικασμᾶ) is born', is set against the truth of the spiritual world, which is apprehended by direct illumination.⁵⁴ Barlaam's version of apophaticism, in Ramfos's view, lays the foundations 'of the whole of European mysticism, which (p.219) presupposes a division of matter and spirit, and assigns to the individual soul the task of bridging the gulf as [the cultivation of] interiority'.⁵⁵

Within a few years, Ramfos modified his position sharply.⁵⁶ What had happened in the interval was that he had read Palamas' *Antirrhethics against Akindynos*, where he had studied Palamas' use of the concept of *enhypostaton* to explain the relationship of the energies to the persons of the Trinity, and had found it unsatisfactory.⁵⁷ The energies, according to Palamas, belong to the essence, not to the hypostases, of the Trinity. But how can such an emission from the impersonal divine essence become a personal reception? Palamas' explanation, in Ramfos's view, lacks coherence.

Palamas uses the idea of the *enhypostaton* in his treatment of the relation between triadic hypostases and uncreated energies. Whereas Akindynos argues that the Son and the Spirit are themselves divine energies, Palamas maintains that the energies are not hypostatic but are only enhypostasized in the persons of the Trinity.⁵⁸ Ramfos accepts that Akindynos' suggestion will not do, but he finds Palamas' position problematic:

Although the energies originate from the divine essence, they are rendered hypostatic as inseparable from the divine persons. They do not originate from the persons but are dependent on them. If the energies originated from the persons, they would constitute the persons' hypostatic idioms, and therefore would not be common to the persons of the Trinity; whereupon they would be individualized and we would end up, by extension, with tritheism. [...] Consequently, for Palamas the matter is solved in a simple way : The persons are not

energies, as Akindynos would have them ; rather, the energies are enhypostatized in the persons. Palamas' solution , however, raises the following vital question , which I have described as a logical gap (λογικὸν κενόν): If with regard to their essential and infinite provenance the energies are impersonal, general, and subsisting at the same time in all three persons of the Godhead, does not this in-existence, but not provenance, put their personal character within inverted commas—only one person would be needed for their manifestation—and does this not make the essentially infinite and uncreated communicable in a simple manner to creatures?⁵⁹

Ramfos's answer is that it does. A non-correspondence is created, he argues, between the essential forms of the energies (truth, justice, etc.) and the finite hypostatic-personal form of our own spirit. In his view this has led to a thoroughly passive approach to grace on the part of the Orthodox, which has created great spiritual problems for them ever since.

(p.220) The solution that Ramfos proposes is to transfer the notion of the *enhypostaton*, which he finds of value, from the energies to the person. By the *enhypostaton* of the person he means 'the possibility of an immanent and at the same time transcendent self which brings my hypostatic catholicity to realization', that is to say, to 'the image of God, thanks to which each of us exists as a vessel of the essential and, in addition, hypostatic gift'. In that event, 'human beings will experience the infinity of God in a creative act in which they themselves are created'.⁶⁰ This seems to me not so very far from Palamas' own thinking. The divinization of the believer by 'enhypostatic illumination', as Palamas (drawing on Maximus the Confessor) goes on to describe it later in his discourses *Against Gregoras*, creates human beings anew, leaving them wholly human but at the same time rendering them wholly God.⁶¹ The way Ramfos puts it is this:

In the *enhypostaton* we read the person as our own broader manifestation between the individual 'I' and the other human being. This encourages an inward gaze and constructs a new horizon of existence, through which we enter into historical time without wounding ourselves or tradition. It allows us to conceive of an interiority wide open in the first place to the fullness of living well (τὸ εὖ ζῆν) and only secondly to the ethics of obligation.⁶²

At the time he wrote this, Ramfos was giving a course of lectures that was published in 2000 as 'Ὁ καημὸς τοῦ ἐνός' [*The Yearning for Oneness*].⁶³ In this work, he pushes back the 'logical gap' from Palamas to Leontius of Byzantium, whom he sees as the originator of the concept of *enhypostasia*.⁶⁴ The gap is rectified, he says, by Maximus the Confessor, who (in *Ambiguum* 7) conceives of the incarnate flesh of Christ as enhypostatized in the Logos, setting the mystery of salvation within the reality of the sensible world: 'Once we accept that Christ is the Logos who has always possessed human nature within himself, the term *enhypostaton* indicates the real universality of humanity and becomes a means of raising the individual by a systatic or unifying process to wholeness.'⁶⁵ What Ramfos seems to have overlooked is that Palamas himself cites texts **(p.221)** from Maximus' *Ambiguum* 7 and arrives at a similar conclusion.⁶⁶ Perhaps he overlooked it because he had already decided to blame hesychast doctrine for curtailing the influence of the fourteenth-century 'renaissance' that flourished among the Byzantine humanists.⁶⁷ He admires the enhanced sense of the individual that the ascetic movement in Byzantium produced but fails to recognize in Palamas a proponent of a thoroughly embodied spiritual teaching:

However much the ascetical tradition honored the world as the 'very good' work of God, it did not succeed in making the body of equal value with the soul, nor did it wish to do so—it wanted people to deny the world as the context of the passions, so as to gain salvation for the

soul. Byzantine individualistic humanism, with its emphasis on the natural sciences, correct reasoning, and bodily and spiritual beauty, tended more or less to bring the two together. By contrast, the hesychastic enlightenment remained tied to a Neoplatonic-Dionysian schema of the soul's redemptive return to the One.⁶⁸

This judgement would actually apply more appropriately to Barlaam than to Palamas. Ramfos's ideological construction of hesychasm as a stance that has stunted the development of individuality has inhibited him from seeing that in Palamas' teaching, as Mario Sumares has argued, the transcendent is drawn into the immanent, rendering the whole human person, body as well as soul, *capax Dei*.

Ramfos's fellow Greek philosopher, Christos Yannaras, shares with him a sense of the Greeks as failed moderns, both of them attributing to this failure most of Greece's present woes. Their analyses, however, of the reasons for it are diametrically opposed. In his struggle to articulate a metaphysics that might be credible in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, Yannaras finds Palamas' essence-energies distinction, particularly his analysis of the consequences entailed by its denial, extremely suggestive.⁶⁹ To understand what Palamas means by the terms 'essence' and 'energies', in Yannaras's view, we need to distinguish between the ontic and the ontological versions of Being.⁷⁰ The ontic version identifies *ousia* ('substance' or 'essence') with onticity. Instead of *ousia* being an event of participation in being (the ontological version), it becomes 'the definitive identity that emerges from the package as whole of properties and determinations of each onticity'.⁷¹ By contrast, the ontological (p.222) version denies that Being can be defined, for simply by trying to define it, we are assuming that it has a definitive and static character.

In his discussions of the ontological version of Being, Yannaras borrows the language of Heidegger, who first gave it coherent expression. Heidegger's inspiration for his concept of Being came partly from his study of ancient Greek philosophy, particularly Heraclitus. Yannaras, too, finds Heraclitus seminal,⁷² but what is even more important for him is the encounter between the Greek philosophical tradition and the Greek Fathers of the Church. The Fathers sought to reconcile the unchanging oneness and unity of the divine substance, as conceived by the Greek philosophers (the logical necessity of God), with the triadic God revealed temporally by the Incarnation (the historical experience of the personal God). The solutions of Sabellius (modalism) and Arius (subordinationism), which were in conformity with the determinism of the Greek philosophical tradition, were rejected by the Cappadocians in favour of the ontological priority of the hypostasis which participates in Being-in-itself: 'We know Being only as a hypostasis of personal otherness, and otherness signifies freedom from any predetermination of substance or nature.'⁷³ In doing so, the Cappadocians and their successors (especially Maximus the Confessor and Gregory Palamas), while marking a discontinuity with earlier Greek philosophy, interpreted Aristotle's thinking on *ousia* and *energeia* more correctly than the mediaeval Western scholastics.

In contrast with the scholastic understanding of knowledge as the coincidence between the object of thought and the concept (*adaequatio rei et intellectus*), in Aristotle—for whom only God is 'a thinking on thinking' (νόησις νοήσεως), an identity of the mind with the object of thought and therefore uniquely the thinker who thinks without defining the object of thought or being defined by it—true knowledge requires that 'we transcend human thinking in order to see (contemplate) God beyond the defining fragmentariness of thoughts. It is on this double transcendence of both human nature and human thought,' says Yannaras, 'that Aristotle bases his ultimate approach to the truth of Being.'⁷⁴

The later Christian Greek tradition draws on the same double transcendence for its own distinction between essence and energy. As Yannaras interprets the terms, following a Maximian and Palamite hermeneutic, essence and energy are not simply a nature and its manifestation; they are *both* ‘modes of existence’.⁷⁵ The primary ontological category is love, ‘the only mode by which Being (p.223) [i.e. the Being of God] is realized hypostatically as freedom and otherness’.⁷⁶ By the same mode, God also hypostasizes the *energeia*, or activity, of his personal freedom in the world that he creates. The knowledge of God is not the result of rational inquiry but is a fact of personal relation. The power of experiential knowledge ‘derives from personal “sharing” and “participation” in the essence or nature, without the participation also signifying identification with the nature’.⁷⁷ Thus Maximus the Confessor says that ‘the whole of God’ interpenetrates ‘the whole of those who are worthy, as befits his goodness’,⁷⁸ and Gregory Palamas insists that ‘even if deifying grace [...] is not the nature of God—for the latter is imparticipable—it is nevertheless a natural energy of God, naturally consequent on God and always contemplated inseparably around him.’⁷⁹ To accept the essence–energy distinction with Palamas and the tradition that he crowns is to embrace an ontology that makes the personal experience of God possible. To deny the distinction in a mistaken attempt to safeguard the divine simplicity makes participation in the divine life ultimately impossible.⁸⁰

Two East–West Colloquia

Participation in the divine life, with the diachronic dimension of divine presence which this requires, was one of the underlying themes of a conference held in Cambridge in 2005 that brought together representatives of the mainly Anglican Radical Orthodoxy movement and Orthodox theologians open to ecumenical conversation.⁸¹ Entitled ‘Transfiguring the World through the Word’, the conference could not neglect Gregory Palamas, who emerges as a significant conversation partner, particularly for two of the main participants, John Milbank and Nikolaos Loudovikos.⁸² In a sympathetic critique of Bulgakov’s sophiology, Milbank compares Bulgakov to Palamas to the disadvantage of the latter.⁸³ Although he accepts that Palamas’ essence–energy distinction does not ‘entirely forego the divine simplicity’, he thinks that even what he regards as Palamas’ (p.224) formal distinction (not a real division but nevertheless one that is more than simply conceptual) still gives rise to a subtle ontology that sets intermediaries between God and the created world:

Clearly for Bulgakov, the Palamite energies played the same role as Sophia, and infused human actions with theurgic power. Nevertheless, sophiology is superior to the Palamite theology precisely *because* it moves away from a literal between and allows the energies simultaneously to be identical with the divine essence itself and yet also to be created as well as uncreated. This actually brings Eastern theology more in line with the best Thomism for which grace has to be created as well as uncreated if it is ever to reach us—but occupies no phantom and limboesque border territory.⁸⁴

Milbank will not allow even a formal distinction between essence and energies. In his view, two dangers arise from such a division. First, it makes deification ‘merely an irradiation by the light of the divine energies’. Secondly, it seems to drive an ontological wedge between divine light and divine darkness, so that the (apophatic) darkness greatly exceeds the (cataphatic) light, making the apophatic mode do all the work of giving immediate access to God beyond all images, even that of light.⁸⁵

Loudovikos denies that Palamas makes a formal division between essence and energies in the way that Milbank suggests, rightly claiming that the distinction in Palamas is *kat' epinoian*—‘not a *separation* but an expression of the fundamental *distinction* between will and essence in God which is not of course a separation either’.⁸⁶ The energies are not to be ontologized. They ‘are not quasi personal agents, mediating the divine perfections to lower beings but personal acts of an “*ek-sisting*” God’.⁸⁷ This ‘standing-outside’ is not outside of the divine nature but is ‘an *ek-stasis* of the nature itself in the Holy Spirit’.⁸⁸ The divine energies are God as he manifests himself *ad extra*, which does not imply in a symmetrical fashion that the essence is God *ad intra*, for the essence is God as he is in himself.

In a response to Loudovikos, Milbank takes issue with the essence–energies distinction as a satisfactory ‘solution’ to the problem of participation in God. (p.225) For him, paradoxically, ‘all participation is in the imparticipable’ because there are no parts to God.⁸⁹ He is not persuaded that the Cappadocians regarded the distinction between the divine essence and the energies as anything more than a mental distinction. Nor does he think that Paul’s talk of *energeia* is betrayed by Aquinas, whose *actus purus* Milbank regards as synonymous with *energeia*. Moreover, Aquinas seems to him to interpret Maximus’ doctrine of the *logoi* in an entirely acceptable way without any ‘betweenness’ interposed between God and creation. Bulgakov also seems to him to get it right: ‘Sophia lies on both sides of the creator/created divide and does not hover in any imagined middle limbo.’⁹⁰ So how does the human person participate in God without the participable energies? Milbank appears to be satisfied with Aquinas’ doctrine of created grace, and regards Bulgakov’s sophiology as an acceptable alternative expression of it. The key issue is clearly the nature of participation in the light of the simplicity of God.

In the following year, Loudovikos published in Greek an important study of participation in both Gregory Palamas and Thomas Aquinas that brought together three essays that had previously appeared in English, supplementing them with a study of participation in Thomism from a Palamite point of view.⁹¹ In the Preface to the book, Loudovikos expresses his satisfaction that new readings of both Aquinas and Palamas are enabling Orthodox as well as Western Christians to get away from stereotypical interpretations of their respective *cynosures*.⁹² He recognizes that for the Orthodox in the theological climate following the so-called ‘Babylonian captivity’ (Florovsky’s phrase), ‘Palamas offered an easy schematization of Orthodox experience, in such a way that the whole of Orthodox theology could be transposed into Palamism and, in this manner, be turned into an ideology’.⁹³ Even if Aquinas discusses his topics systematically in accordance with the School tradition, neither he nor Palamas were *ideological* thinkers. A proper appreciation of this by theologians of both traditions would enable them to join in a common search for truth, not fudging any issues or conflating doctrines in a (p.226) spirit of ‘ecumenism’, but engaging in what Loudovikos calls a shared journey towards ‘the greatest and most honourable’ goal.⁹⁴

This goal is for us to become in Christ ‘partakers of the divine nature’ (2 Peter 1:4). Deification in Palamas is not identical with participation, but there is a profound ontological connection between them, for deification is the eschatological foundation of participation. The shorthand expression Loudovikos uses for participation is ‘dialogical syn-energy’. This is more than simply conforming our will to the will of God (a moral union); it is fundamentally a Christological concept which may be extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to ordinary human beings:

in Christ we do not have a confusion of natures but a hypostatic union through the perfect *perichoresis* of the two natures, through the complete dialogue of created and

uncreated energies in him. Christ's theandric energy is nothing other than a dialogical syn-energy of his two natures that make them perfectly co-exist and collaborate.'⁹⁵

Essence and energy are related differently from the two natures in Christ, energy being 'the willed personal expression of divine being'.⁹⁶ Participation in the divine energies is analogical, analogy in Palamas (though not in Aquinas) always meaning 'a synergetic dialogical reciprocity' because an analogical action is something that takes place between different beings: 'analogy ... refers not to a similitude of essences but to an analogous action between different agents in order for them to achieve union.'⁹⁷ This is not an individualistic enterprise. Before my entering into union with God through the vision of the divine light 'becomes a syn-energy/dialogue with God, my action has to become a syn-energy/dialogue with the other', that is, pre-eminently by the Eucharist, 'since it is in the Eucharist where this double participational analogy of this dialogical syn-ergy is accomplished'.⁹⁸ The expression 'dialogical syn-energy of reciprocity' may be inelegant, but it encapsulates strikingly the nature of Palamas' teaching on union with God attained in perfect freedom.

In 2008, three years after the Radical Orthodoxy–Eastern Orthodoxy colloquium, a second colloquium was held in Cambridge at which Milbank and Loudovikos met again. This time the theme was the essence–energies distinction, with Bradshaw's *Aristotle East and West* providing the fundamental text for discussion. The thesis of *Aristotle East and West* is that the Aristotelian distinction between *ousia* and *energeia* was better understood in the East than (p.227) in the West. It was the achievement of the Cappadocians to build on the distinction so that the *energeiai* manifest the divine *ousia* in a dynamic fashion but without constituting it.⁹⁹ In the Eastern tradition, *energeiai* are forces that can be shared in. The Latin translation of *energeia* as *operatio* does not do justice to the association of *energeia* with actuality. Thus the notion of participation in the divine *energeiai* did not gain much traction in Western thought, whereas in the East participation came to mean not simply, as in the West, conforming the human will to the will of God, but sharing dynamically in the *being* of God.

The question then arises: How is it that if the energies are divine realities that are participable by creatures they do not compromise the simplicity of God? Palamas' answer is that the energies are not hypostases—they are real but without a self-subsistent reality. Nor are they subject to change in the way that all composite realities are: 'it is not acting and energy but being acted upon and passivity which constitute composition'.¹⁰⁰ Bradshaw is satisfied that by positing the energies as participable 'realities' (*pragmata*) between the divine essence and creatures Palamas is not introducing multiplicity into the Godhead. But there are aspects of Palamas' account of the essence–energy distinction that do cause him unease. For example, he does not find that Palamas makes any connection between the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of the energies. 'Thus, although he affirms both the traditional teaching about the inner life of the Trinity and the distinction between essence and energies, he does not relate them to one another.'¹⁰¹

In an article published two years after *Aristotle East and West*, Bradshaw returns to the topic of the divine energies in an effort to persuade Western theologians and religious philosophers to take Palamas seriously.¹⁰² After summarizing the Greek philosophical and patristic tradition relating to *energeia*, he offers several reasons for regarding this (Palamite) tradition as superior to the Western tradition based on Augustine and Aquinas. First, Palamite apophaticism allows for a more profound idea of God than one which sees him as pure act and therefore as intrinsically intelligible, even if not fully comprehensible because of the limitations of the human mind. Secondly, an ever-deepening participation in the divine

energies, which engages the body as well as the soul, is more satisfactory than a purely intellectual attainment of the beatific vision through the infusion of the blessed with the *lumen gloriae* to enable them to apprehend the divine essence. Thirdly, divine simplicity is better preserved by the essence–energy distinction than by treating God’s will as identical with his (p.228) essence. The latter raises more problems than it solves, for it would seem to limit God’s freedom or else make him subject to change: either God can only act as he does, or if he responds to creaturely initiatives, creatures would in some way determine the divine essence. Bradshaw’s ‘Palamism’ is thus a challenge to the Western tradition of philosophical theology to reconsider some of its fundamental positions.

At the beginning of his article, Bradshaw acknowledges that even though there is ‘virtually unanimous acceptance’ that Palamite theology represents the authentic teaching of the Orthodox Church, and ‘widespread although far from unanimous acceptance’ that Palamas is in full continuity with the Greek Fathers, the assertion that his teaching ‘is of essential value today, representing the best and most cogent way of understanding the relationship of God to the world’ has received ‘not even much attention, to say nothing of agreement, beyond the bounds of Eastern Orthodoxy’.¹⁰³ It was in response to this observation that the 2008 Cambridge colloquium was held to debate the differences and similarities between Palamite theology and various Western positions and see what each could learn from the other(s).¹⁰⁴ The answer at first sight would seem to be not much. A number of the contributors to the volume resulting from the colloquium take the view that Aquinas and Palamas are incompatible, with Palamas offering a much better account of the relationship between created and uncreated than Aquinas, a view endorsed by Bradshaw at the end of the volume. Milbank takes the opposite view, arguing that Aquinas was more successful than Palamas in giving an account of mediation between creation and the Godhead ‘without endorsing the idea that God requires the aid of a mediating sphere between divine and non-divine reality’ in the Plotinian manner.¹⁰⁵ Between these two poles lie Nikolaos Loudovikos and the Dominican Antoine Lévy. Loudovikos admires both Aquinas’ insistence on divine unity and Palamas’ account of the existential realization of participation in God, cautiously suggesting that the two are contiguous: ‘Thomas concludes with what Palamas started and tries to defend in his lifetime.’¹⁰⁶ Lévy likewise regards the thinking of Palamas and Aquinas as dissimilar but complementary, different (p.229) accounts of divine activity within a unified Eastern and Western whole.¹⁰⁷ One interesting paper by the Greek-Australian philosopher, Nick Trakakis, leaves aside the attempt to reconcile Palamas with Aquinas and tries to make sense of the essence–energies distinction in modern philosophical terms.¹⁰⁸ Trakakis is not happy with accounts of the distinction (under the logical form: the essence is unknowable; the energies are knowable; both are God; therefore God is both knowable and unknowable) that complacently fall back on the notion of antinomy. ‘Of course, a paradox or an antinomy,’ he says, ‘is not yet a formal contradiction, but theologians would do better to vigorously attempt to resolve antinomies or paradoxes, rather than jumping at the first opportunity to embrace and proclaim them—as though this was the surest sign that one had scaled the heights of the divine mystery.’¹⁰⁹ Trakakis himself attempts to resolve the antinomy by using Gottlob Frege’s distinction between ‘reference’ (*Bedeutung*) and ‘sense’ (*Sinn*), the divine essence and the divine energies having the same reference but different senses. There is no ontological division between essence and energy but equally the energies and names of God are more than merely nominal in nature: ‘The Fregean way out is to say that the energies are modes of presentation that reflect, not a division in the divinity, but a way of perceiving God—one that is not simply the product of the human mind, but accurately represents who God is.’¹¹⁰ In his comment on this suggestion, however, Bradshaw objects to interpreting the energies as ‘ways of perceiving’ and ‘modes of presentation’. In the Fregean scheme, he says,

these would be ‘senses’ rather than ‘references’. The energies ‘are not modes of presentation, but God conceived under various such modes, and the same is true of the divine essence’.¹¹¹ These colloquia illustrate the great difficulty of demonstrating compatibility between Palamas and the Western intellectual tradition. Bradshaw challenges his readers to make a straightforward choice between the two. Milbank finds Palamas as filtered through Bulgakov’s sophiology more palatable than Palamas taken neat. Loudovikos recognizes the ideological nature of Palamism in modern Orthodoxy as well as in neo-Thomism and attempts to reformulate Palamas’ teaching in terms of the language of reciprocity. This language, drawn as it is (p.230) from Maximus the Confessor, offers a real way forward. Palamas saw himself primarily as an interpreter of the Cappadocians, Dionysius, and Maximus. The closer he can be shown to be to Maximus, whose stature as a theologian is uncontested in the West, the easier it will be to win a sympathetic hearing for him.

Conclusion

Before Palamas can enter fully into fruitful debate with modern philosophers and theologians many more of his texts need to be translated, because it is only through an increased familiarity with his work that deeply entrenched ideological misinterpretations of his thinking can be overcome. There are nevertheless encouraging signs that genuine efforts are being made, especially among Orthodox scholars, to express Palamas’ philosophical theology in terms that can enrich modern and post-modern theological thought. Christos Yannaras and David Bradshaw argue robustly that Palamas’ philosophical theology got it right and the Western tradition got it wrong, challenging us to accept the Eastern tradition as fundamentally sound and the Western as fundamentally unsound. But despite the rigour of their arguments it is doubtful whether they will convince most Western Christians. A non-confrontational method is more likely to be effective. Thus Torstein Tollefsen’s work on how Palamas can help us to conceive of the pluralization of divine activity is especially important, as is Manuel Sumares’ advocacy of Palamas’ potential contribution, through his teaching on the capacity of creatures to receive divinity, to post-modernity’s redirection of religiosity. Nikolaos Loudovikos’ discussions of ‘dialogical syn-energy’ are also important, for they offer a fresh perspective on how the human and the divine can be conceived in reciprocal terms without either the drawing down of the transcendent into the immanent diminishing the divine or the raising up of the finite to the uncreated destroying the human. Others too have produced valuable work. David Butner has suggested how we can ‘move beyond the impasse of binary distinctions’ without creating what John Milbank has called a ‘limboesque’ intermediate state between God and the world. And Stelios Ramfos, even if he ultimately takes a negative view of Palamas, indicates the potential in Palamas’ use of the notion of *enhyposiasia*. What is clear is that Palamas has already grown out of his role as an identity marker for modern Orthodoxy and has begun to take his place in current Western theological debates. In this respect, he is already becoming ‘the inheritance of all Christians’.

Notes:

(¹) Kern, ‘Dukhovnye predki’, 131, cited by Nedelsky, ‘Palamas in exile’, 79.

(²) The patriarch Antony IV (1389–1397, with a break in the second half of 1390) adopted a hard-line policy against the anti-Palamites; for details, see Russell, ‘Palamism and the Circle of Demetrius Cydones’, 171.

⁽³⁾ In *Aeterni Patris* (4 August 1879), Leo XIII commended the study of St Thomas Aquinas, which led to a strong revival of scholastic theology. The sharp distinction between nature and grace that this neo-scholastic theology made provoked a reaction among the theologians of *la nouvelle théologie*, who found the patristic doctrine of deification (together with Palamite theology which made it central) helpful to their thinking.

⁽⁴⁾ Barlaam, *Letter III to Palamas* 2 (Fyrigos, 300. 17–19).

⁽⁵⁾ Akindynos, *Letter 70 to Maximos* (Hero, 298. 54–6).

⁽⁶⁾ For example, Palamas, *Letter to Daniel of Ainos* 3 (Christou II, 376; Perrella III, 718), *Letter to John Gabras* 4 (Christou II, 329; Perrella III, 630), and *Letter to Philotheos* 6 (Christou II, 522; Perrella III, 978).

⁽⁷⁾ These are, in chronological order, (1) an anthology from the *Triads* selected by John Meyendorff and translated by Nicholas Gendle in the Classics of Western Spirituality series (New York: Paulist Press and London: SPCK, 1983); (2) the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* edited and translated by Robert Sinkewicz (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988); (3) the *Letter to the Nun Xene*, translated with an introduction by Daniel M. Rogich in *Saint Gregory Palamas, Treatise on the Spiritual Life* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1995); (4) the *Letter to the Nun Xene*, the *New Testament Decalogue*, a longer section of *Triads* I, 2 than that included in the Classics of Western Spirituality series, and *Three Texts on Prayer and Purity of Heart* (besides Nikodemos the Hagiorite's version of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* and the *Hagioritic Tome*) translated by G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware in vol. IV of the complete text of the *Philokalia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1995); (5) the *Hagioritic Tome* translated by Robert Sinkewicz in 'Gregory Palamas', 183–8; (6) the complete corpus of the sixty-one homilies translated by Christopher Veniamin (Waymart, Pennsylvania: Mount Thabor Publishing, 2009); (7) Homilies 34 and 35, *On the Transfiguration*, translated by Brian Daley (in *Light on the Mountain: Greek Patristic and Byzantine Homilies on the Transfiguration of the Lord* [Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2013], 355–78). The present writer is engaged in the translation of a further selection of texts (principally Philotheos' encomium, some letters of Palamas, and the Synodal Tomes pertaining to the Palamite controversy) to be published by Liverpool University Press in their Translated Texts for Byzantinists series.

⁽⁸⁾ David Bentley Hart, Foreword, in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, xiii.

⁽⁹⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and participation*, 194.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco, Calif.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 190.

⁽¹¹⁾ Christos Yannaras, *Orthodoxy and the West*, trans. Peter Chamberas and Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006), 47–50.

⁽¹²⁾ John Romanides, *Πρόλογος* and *Ἱστοριοδογματικὴ Εἰσαγωγή* in vol. 1 of the *Modern Greek series* *Ρωμαῖοι ἢ Ρωμηοὶ Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας* ↑ (Thessaloniki, 1984), 11–194; John Romanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικαὶ σύνοδοι καὶ πολιτισμός* ↑ *Theologia* 4 (1995), 646–80.

⁽¹³⁾ Barlaam's anti-Latin works continued to be copied and appreciated in the East long after Pope Clement VI appointed him bishop of Gerace; see Antonis Fyrigos, *Barlaam Calabro, Opere contro i Latini* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1998).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Akindynos, *Letter 45* (Hero 192. 70–9).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Bouyer, *Le Consolateur*, 321–2; Reinhard Flogaus, ‘Inspiration—Exploitation—Distortion: The Use of St Augustine in the Hesychast Controversy’, in Papanikolaou and Demacopoulos, *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*, 63–80.

⁽¹⁶⁾ As Perrella says, this risks sparking off another round of polemics, but nevertheless needs to be done (*Gregorio Palamas, Atto e luce divina*, cxxviii). It has been attempted most recently in an illuminating article by D. Glenn Butner, ‘Communion with God: an Energetic Defense of Gregory Palamas’, *Modern Theology* 32:1 (2016), 20–44. See also, from an Orthodox perspective, Stavros Yangazoglou, ‘Ο ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς καὶ ἡ νεώτερη δυτικὴ θεολογία †’, *Theologia* 83:3 (2012), 23–53; Tikhon Alexander Pino, ‘Beyond Neo-Palamism: Interpreting the Legacy of St Gregory Palamas’, *Analogia* 3:2 (2017), 53–73. (My own article, ‘Inventing Palamism’, in the same third issue of *Analogia*, 75–96, has mostly been incorporated into the present study.)

⁽¹⁷⁾ Guichardan, *Le problème de la simplicité divine*; Trethowan, ‘Irrationality and Theology in the Palamite Distinction’.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Robert Jenson, *Systematic Theology I: The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 153.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ivanka, *Hesychasmus und Palamismus*; Le Guillou, ‘Lumière et charité’; Garrigues, ‘L’énergie divine’.

⁽²⁰⁾ LaCugna, *God for Us*, 196.

⁽²¹⁾ Wendebourg, *Geist oder Energie?*, 171–2, 233–4, 244–5.

⁽²²⁾ Even thinkers sympathetic to Palamas (such as Bruce D. Marshall, ‘Action and Person: Do Palamas and Aquinas Agree About the Spirit?’, *SVTQ* 39 [1995], 379–408, at 394; David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 242) often believe that he does not relate the energies to the Trinity satisfactorily. For Palamas’ claim that he does relate them satisfactorily, see *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite* 25 (Christou II, 188; Perrella I, 1168); *On unity and distinction* 15, 16, 21 (Christou II, 79–80, 84; Perrella I, 950–2, 960); *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* VI, 58, 61, 67, 81 (Christou III, 429–30, 431–3, 437, 447–8; Perrella II, 738, 742–4, 752, 774); and *150 Chapters* 90–1 (Sinkewicz, 188–90; Perrella III, 102–4).

⁽²³⁾ The Dominican Jacques Lison, a student of André de Halleux, set the benchmark for such studies with his doctoral dissertation, published in 1994 as *L’Esprit répandu*.

⁽²⁴⁾ Spiteris, a Greek Capuchin and the Roman Catholic archbishop of Corfu, published his *Palamas: La grazia e l’esperanza* in 1996. Not all his Italian readers have agreed with his fine irenic exposition of Palamas’ doctrine of grace. My own copy has been annotated in the margin by a previous reader with furious remarks such as ‘incomprensibile’ and ‘come sempre, obscurum per obscurius’, rather in the manner of a mediaeval reader annotating a manuscript with comments like ‘the heretic is a liar!’.

⁽²⁵⁾ Stavros Yangazoglou, editor of the Athens journal *Theologia*, published *Κοινωνία Θεώσεως* in 2001. Inspired by Lison, Yangazoglou’s principal aim in his study is to correct Lossky’s division of the divine economy into separate economies of the Son and the Spirit.

⁽²⁶⁾ Håkan Gunnarsson wrote his *Mystical Realism in the Early Theology of Gregory Palamas* as a doctoral thesis defended at the University of Göteborg in 2002.

(²⁷) Fadi Georgi, now Fr Porphyrios Georgi, teaches at the University of Balamand. His *Ἡ Ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ Ζωή*, on Palamas' eschatology, published in 2010, is the fruit of his doctoral studies carried out at the University of Thessaloniki under Dimitrios Tselengidis, Georgios Mantzaridis, and Nikos Matsoukas.

(²⁸) Notably in Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, and Nikolaos Loudovikos, *Ὁ Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς*. *Εἶναι καὶ Μέθεξι στὸν Γρηγόριο Παλαμᾶ καὶ τὸν Θωμᾶ Ἀκινάτη* (Athens: Harmos, 2010). Tollefsen is professor of philosophy at the University of Oslo. Loudovikos, a trained psychologist and Orthodox priest, teaches at the Higher Ecclesiastical Academy of the University of Thessaloniki.

(²⁹) Sumares is an Orthodox priest of Portuguese-American origin who teaches at the University of Braga and edits the journal *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia*. For his articles on Palamas, see below, note 45.

(³⁰) David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*; Christos Yannaras, especially *Person and Eros*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007), and Christos Yannaras, *The Schism in Philosophy*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2015). Bradshaw teaches philosophy at the University of Kentucky. Yannaras is emeritus professor of philosophy of the Panteion University of Athens.

(³¹) Stelios Ramfos, *Ἑρμηνευτικὸ ὑστερόγραφο γιὰ ἓνα ἴσ' ἄκενδ' τῆς Παλαμικῆς θεολογίας*, *Indiktos* 7 (winter 1997), 15–21; *Yearning for the One*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011). Ramfos is a philosopher who teaches at several institutes in Athens.

(³²) A. N. Williams, *The Ground of Union*. Williams's book is based on a Yale doctoral dissertation, 'Deification in Thomas Aquinas and Gregory Palamas', defended in 1995. With regard to Palamas, it seems to rely mostly on the English translations of Gendle and Sinkewicz. Lévy's work goes deeper: Antoine Lévy OP, *Le créé et l'incrélé. Les origines de la querelle palamienne chez Maxime le Confesseur et Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Vrin, 2006); cf. Antoine Lévy OP, 'The Woes of Originality: Discussing David Bradshaw's Aristotelian Journey into Neo-Palamism', in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 96–121.

(³³) Bruce D. Marshall, 'Action and Person: Do Palamas and Aquinas Agree About the Spirit?', *SVTQ* 39 (1995), 379–408. Marshall wrote this article as a Lutheran, but has since become a Roman Catholic. Aquinas, although not regarded as opposed to Palamas, evidently proved the more persuasive.

(³⁴) Marshall, 'Action and Person', 385–6.

(³⁵) Marshall, 'Action and Person', 388.

(³⁶) On Palamas' distinction, see Chapter 7. In Marshall's view what really distinguishes Palamas from Aquinas is not their doctrine of the Spirit's action but different concepts of participation ('Action and Person', 392–4).

(³⁷) See especially the papers in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, and in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*.

(³⁸) Butner, 'Communion with God', 44.

⁽³⁹⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 186. He does not believe, however, that this will achieve a universal following.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ I agree more with Bradshaw, who translates *energeia* as ‘energy’ because Palamas ‘must have in mind by *energeia* not only activity or operation, but a divine power and presence that is perceptible to the purified senses’ (*Aristotle East and West*, 238).

⁽⁴¹⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 186–200.

⁽⁴²⁾ Reinhard Flogaus, ‘Palamas and Barlaam Revisited: A Reassessment of East and West in the Hesychast Controversy of 14th century Byzantium’, *SVTQ* 42 (1998), 1–32, here at 15.

⁽⁴³⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 200.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ibid.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Manuel Sumares, ‘Post-Secularity, Orthodoxy, and the Theosis Factor: Blondel and St. Gregory Palamas’, *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 67/1 (2011), 81–102; Manuel Sumares, ‘The Theotokos as a Mystical Theologian’, in Athanasopoulos, *Triune God*, 142–53; Manuel Sumares, ‘The Life of Ordinary Life: Hesychasm and Immanence’, *Analogia* 3/2 (2017), 97–111.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ See John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Sumares, ‘Post-Secularity’, 85; cf. Sumares, ‘Life of Ordinary Life’, 100.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Sumares, ‘Life of Ordinary Life’, 107–8.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Sumares, ‘Life of Ordinary Life’, 109–10.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Sumares, ‘Life of Ordinary Life’, 109.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Sumares, ‘Life of Ordinary Life’, 110.

⁽⁵²⁾ Stelios Ramfos, *Ἰλαρὸν φῶς τοῦ κόσμου* (Athens: Harmos, 2nd edn, 2006), 249–78, 367–76.

⁽⁵³⁾ Ramfos, *Ἰλαρὸν φῶς*, 253.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Ramfos, *Ἰλαρὸν φῶς*, 254.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Ramfos, *Ἰλαρὸν φῶς*, 254–5.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Yangazoglou says that he performs a complete volte -face (Stavros Yangazoglou, *Ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς καὶ ἡ νεώτερη δυτικὴ θεολογία*, 51–2).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Stelios Ramfos, *Ἑρμηνευτικὸ ὑστερόγραφο γιὰ ἓνα | ‘κενὸ’ τῆς Παλαμικῆς θεολογίας*, *Indiktos* 7 (winter 1997), 15–21.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ramfos gives examples from *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* I, iv, 7–10 (Christou III, 43–6; Perrella II, 12–16).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Ramfos, *Ἑρμηνευτικὸ ὑστερόγραφο*, 17–18.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Ramfos, *Ἑρμηνευτικὸ ὑστερόγραφο*, 19.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Palamas, *Against Gregoras* III, 21 (Christou IV, 333; Perrella II, 1118), quoting Maximus, *Ambiguum* 7, PG 91, 1088C; cf. Wilken’s translation of the whole passage and its

context in Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, *The Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ. Select Writings from St Maximus the Confessor* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 63.

⁽⁶²⁾ Ramfos, Ἑρμηνευτικὸ ὑστερόγραφο, 19.

⁽⁶³⁾ English translation: Stelios Ramfos, *Yearning for the One*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Ramfos follows the older scholarship, going back to Friedrich Loofs, which attributes the relevant texts to Leontius of Byzantium, rather than to his contemporary, Leontius of Jerusalem, but this does not affect his argument (*Yearning for the One*, 121–8, 278–86). On the true origins of *enhypostasia*, see Lang, ‘Anhypostatos–Enhypostatos’.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Ramfos, *Yearning for the One*, 123. Ramfos refers the reader to *Ambiguum* 7, PG 91, 1101BC. It may be noted that this *Ambiguum* contains one of Maximus' very rare usages of the word *enhypostaton* itself (at 1077C): ἀσυνγύτως ὑπάρχοντα ἐνούσιόν τε καὶ ἐνυπόστατον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς θεὸν λόγον ὡς ἀρχὴν καὶ αἰτίαν τῶν ὅλων.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Cf. Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 27 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 597; Perrella I, 818); *On Divine and Deifying Participation* 21 (Christou II, 155–6; Perrella I, 1102–4); *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* III, vi, 16 (Christou III, 173; Perrella II, 256); *Against Gregoras* III, 21 (Christou IV, 333; Perrella II, 1118).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Ramfos, *Yearning for the One*, 197–202.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Ramfos, *Yearning for the One*, 203.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Christos Yannaras, Ἐξί φιλοσοφικῆς ζωγραφιᾶς (Athens: Ikaros, 2011), 204–6.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ The main treatments of this distinction are in Christos Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007), 28–30, 52–70 (§§9, 19–23); and Christos Yannaras, *The Schism in Philosophy*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2015), 165–210 (§§26–8).

⁽⁷¹⁾ Yannaras, *Schism*, 182.

⁽⁷²⁾ Particularly Heraclitus' assertion that rationality is constituted by participation: ‘when we share something in common we express the truth, and when we hold something in private we deceive ourselves’ (Yannaras, *Schism*, 45–6).

⁽⁷³⁾ Yannaras, *Schism*, 205.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Yannaras, *Schism*, 177–8, with reference to Aristotle, *Metaphysics* XII, 9, 1074b15–1075a10. Note the epistemological basis here of ‘antinomic’ thinking.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ For an excellent analysis of this, see Dionysios Skliris, Ἡ Ὄντολογία τοῦ Τρόπου στη σκέψη τοῦ Χρήστου Γιανναρά, in D. Angelis et al., Χρήστος Γιανναράς (Athens: Manifesto, 2015), 91–124.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Yannaras, *Schism*, 208.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, 60 (§21).

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, PG 91, 1076C.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Gregory Palamas, *Apologia* 28 (Christou II, 116; Perrella I, 1024).

(⁸⁰) Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, 62–6 (§22).

(⁸¹) The papers given at the conference, together with some additional essays, were published by Adrian Pabst and Christoph Schneider (eds), *Encounter Between Eastern Orthodoxy and Radical Orthodoxy: Transfiguring the World Through the Word* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

(⁸²) Curiously (but not untypically of Western publications), although Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor are fully indexed in *Encounter Between Eastern Orthodoxy and Radical Orthodoxy*, there is no entry for ‘Gregory Palamas’ or ‘Palamite theology’. Mentions or discussions of Palamas or Palamite, however, may be found on pp. xiii, 42, 43, 70–1, 77, 148–9, 150–1, 153, 160–1, 162, 186–7.

(⁸³) John Milbank, ‘Sophiology and Theurgy: The New Theological Horizon’, in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter between Orthodoxy and Radical Orthodoxy*, 45–85.

(⁸⁴) Milbank, ‘Sophiology and Theurgy’, 71.

(⁸⁵) Milbank, ‘Sophiology and Theurgy’, 71–2. This is what he thinks Vladimir Lossky does in *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (London: James Clarke, 1957), 23–44.

(⁸⁶) Nicholas Loudovikos, ‘Ontology Celebrated: Remarks of an Orthodox on Radical Orthodoxy’, in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, 141–55, at 148–9. Although Loudovikos’s comment is correct in its emphasis, Palamas himself is actually wary of the expression *kat’ epinoian*. He uses it only three times, in *Triads* III, iii, 10 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 713. 15; Perrella I, 914), *Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite* 39 (Christou II, 202; Perrella I, 1196), and *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* II, xix, 92 (Christou III, 149; Perrella II, 216), in the last two instances in quotations from Basil with reference to Eunomius. For a discussion of the reasons why Palamas avoided *kat’ epinoian*, see Norman Russell, ‘The Christological Context of Palamas’ Approach to Participation’, in Athanasopoulos, *Triune God*, 190–8.

(⁸⁷) Loudovikos, ‘Ontology Celebrated’, 149.

(⁸⁸) Loudovikos, ‘Ontology Celebrated’, 151.

(⁸⁹) John Milbank, ‘Ecumenical Orthodoxy—A Response to Nicholas Loudovikos’, in Pabst and Schneider, *Encounter*, 156–64, at 161.

(⁹⁰) Milbank, ‘Ecumenical Orthodoxy’, 161.

(⁹¹) Nikolaos Loudovikos, ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς ὅτι εἶναι καὶ Μέθεξι στὸν Γρηγόριο Παλαμᾶ καὶ τὸν Θωμᾶ Ἀκινάτη ὁ ὅτι’ (Athens: Harmos, 2010). The essays that had previously appeared in English are: Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation’ (Part I); Loudovikos, ‘Ontology Celebrated’ (Appendix I); and Nicholas Loudovikos, ‘Eikon and mimesis eucharistic ecclesiology and the ecclesial ontology of dialogical reciprocity’, *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 11, Nos. 2–3 (2011), 123–36 (Appendix II). The new material, which is on participation in Thomism, constitutes Part II: Τὸ ψυχοσωματικὸ ποιοὺν τῆς μετοχῆς στὸν Θωμισμὸν μὲ τὰ μάτια τοῦ Γρηγορίου Παλαμᾶ.

(⁹²) In this connection, Marcus Plested has made a welcome contribution with his *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*.

(⁹³) Loudovikos, ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 9.

(⁹⁴) Loudovikos, ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 10.

- (⁹⁵) Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation’, 127; ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 32.
- (⁹⁶) Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation’, 145; ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 75.
- (⁹⁷) Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation’, 131; ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 39. See also the discussion of analogy in Nikolaos Loudovikos, *A Eucharistic Ontology: Maximus the Confessor’s Eschatological Ontology of Being as Dialogical Reciprocity*, trans Elizabeth Theokritoff (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010), 217–20, where Loudovikos compares Aquinas’s *analogia entis* with the Greek patristic version of analogy as dialogue.
- (⁹⁸) Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation’, 132; ‘Ο Μόχθος τῆς Μετοχῆς’, 42–3.
- (⁹⁹) Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 170–1; for a critique dissenting from Bradshaw, see Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea*, 222–4.
- (¹⁰⁰) Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 241, quoting Palamas, *150 Chapters*, §145 (trans. Sinkewicz, 251, modified).
- (¹⁰¹) Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 242.
- (¹⁰²) David Bradshaw, ‘The Concept of the Divine Energies’, *Philosophy and Theology* 18:1 (2006), 93–120, reprinted in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 27–49.
- (¹⁰³) Bradshaw, ‘The Concept of the Divine Energies’, 27–8. In conversation with me Christos Yannaras once lamented the fact that apart from the essay of the young Rowan Williams on his 1970 doctoral thesis (R. D. Williams, ‘The Theology of Personhood: A Study of the Thought of Christos Yannaras’, *Sobornost* [1st series] 6 [1972], 415–30) no Western theologian or philosopher has paid serious attention to his work. This has now begun to be redressed.
- (¹⁰⁴) The papers given at the colloquium together with Bradshaw’s 2006 *Philosophy and Theology* article were published five years later in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*.
- (¹⁰⁵) John Milbank, ‘Christianity and Platonism in East and West’, in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 158–209, at 174.
- (¹⁰⁶) Nikolaos Loudovikos, ‘Striving for Participation: Palamite Analogy as Dialogical Synergy and Thomist Analogy as Emanational Similitude’, in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 122–48, at 148.
- (¹⁰⁷) Antoine Lévy OP, ‘The Woes of Originality: Discussing David Bradshaw’s Aristotelian Journey into Neo-Palamism’, in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 96–121. Lévy’s conclusions are broadly similar to those of A. N. Williams, *The Ground of Union*.
- (¹⁰⁸) N. N. Trakakis, ‘The Sense and Reference of the Essence and Energies’, in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 210–31.
- (¹⁰⁹) Trakakis, ‘Sense and Reference’, 218. Trakakis adds in a footnote: ‘This is not to deny the value of antinomy in theology, but to point out that antinomies may only require us to modify our principles of logic rather than to reject them outright.’
- (¹¹⁰) Trakakis, ‘Sense and Reference’, 223.

(¹¹¹) David Bradshaw, 'In Defence of the Essence/Energies Distinction: A Reply to Critics', in Athanasopoulos and Schneider, *Divine Essence and Divine Energies*, 256–73, at 261. In Trakakis's case, logic has proved to be inimical to faith. Since the publication of his article he has announced his renunciation of Christianity on the grounds that any kind of religious belief is incompatible with the pursuit of truth through philosophy.

Concluding reflections

During the last two decades, scholars have been moving beyond the twentieth-century's ideological constructions of Palamism. This has been facilitated by enormous advances in our understanding of the historical events of the fourteenth century, the intellectual currents of the period, and the theological context in which Palamas formed his convictions. The publication of texts, while not yet complete, is now ample, enabling us to engage with Palamas' thinking in an informed way. Whether we find that thinking persuasive is another matter, but the materials are more accessible now than at any time since the fourteenth century.

The difficulties that still impede a fruitful engagement with Palamas' thinking concern his character as well as his ideas. Palamas remains an enigmatic figure. It is not, of course, necessary to *like* a theologian or philosopher in order to find his thinking persuasive, but it is important to have confidence in his integrity. Estimates of Palamas' character, by his contemporaries as well as by modern scholars, vary considerably. One thing, however, is perfectly clear: Palamas had a beguiling personality. Before withdrawing to Mount Athos, 'he persuaded his closest relations and the more loyal and intelligent of the servants' to embrace the monastic life in Constantinople.¹ On his leaving for the Holy Mountain in about 1319, he took his two brothers with him. When Akindynos met him in Beroia in the late 1320s, he was totally captivated by him.² Two famous Athonite ascetics testified after his death that 'just to be in the admirable Gregory's company and to see him and converse with him' was beneficial to their souls and helpful to salvation.³ In addition, the patriarch Philotheos declared 'from intimate personal knowledge of him' that he held him to be a saint.⁴ It was difficult to resist his attraction.

(p.232) After his appointment as metropolitan of Thessaloniki in 1347, Palamas became an exemplary bishop. He preached sermons of practical utility and theological profundity without worrying his hearers about the essence–energies distinction.⁵ The people of Thessaloniki had confidence in his judgement. In illustration of his pastoral qualities, Philotheos tells the story of a young girl who had been adopted by a formidable nun, the founder of a monastery. In adolescence, the girl had developed double incontinence and in consequence the nun was planning to get rid of her, but she first took her to see the bishop. Palamas discerned the anxieties oppressing the girl as a result of the nun's harshness and 'completely cured the body of the one and the soul of the other, or rather, to be more precise, he healed both of them in both respects, for they were both sick in body and in soul'.⁶ After the victory of John Kantakouzenos in the civil war of 1341–1347, Palamas may well have nurtured ambitions for high ecclesiastical office,⁷ but once he became metropolitan of Thessaloniki, none of his contemporaries found anything to blame in his episcopal conduct. The most persistent critic of Palamas' personal character was Akindynos, whose 'admirable Palamas' of 1341 had become by 1345 guilty of 'moral depravity'.⁸ Akindynos' modern advocate, Juan Nadal Cañellas, supports his paragon to the hilt, accusing Palamas of ambition, pride, cowardice—'he often throws a stone but hides his arm'—lies, calumnies, and, when forced to admit the truth of the accusations against him, dissimulation.⁹ Much of this seems to me to ignore the rhetorical conventions of dialectics: the denigration of the opponent's character, the anticipation of what he will say, the deduction from his premises of absurd conclusions, and, in theological disputation, the assimilation of his opinions to those of ancient heretics. These were techniques used by both Palamas and Akindynos. It may be granted that Palamas was politically (p.233) astute and knew how to organize his support.¹⁰ When Barlaam laid formal charges of heresy against him in 1340, Palamas

immediately drew up a document, the *Hagioretic Tome*, to which he had the bishop of Hierissos and the governing body of the Holy Mountain append their signatures. When he was under house arrest in Constantinople during the civil war, he would sometimes instruct his correspondents in the arguments they were to use against his opponents so that they could present them as their own.¹¹ But this is hardly an indication of cowardice. Indeed on occasion, as when Kalekas sought to have him arrested on a charge of treason, or when he engaged in debate with Muslims during his captivity among the Turks, he showed himself to be completely fearless.¹²

There remains the charge that Palamas falsified documents. Many years ago Nadal drew attention to two different versions of Palamas' *Third Letter to Akindynos*.¹³ The one published among Palamas' collected works differs from the one Nadal discovered in a manuscript in Munich containing some of Akindynos' writings.¹⁴ In Nadal's view, the original version (the one preserved by Akindynos), dating from just before the synods of 1341, 'clearly has for its subject the existence of several divinities which are uncreated by nature'.¹⁵ The second version, redacted by Palamas after the July synod, suppresses the friendly references to Akindynos, together with comments that might be interpreted to favour ditheism, and adds new material. Nadal has convincingly established the priority of Akindynos' version, but his judgement that Palamas subsequently falsified the text in order to conceal his true opinions is contestable. Certainly, Palamas revised his writings for general circulation. But his claim that it was (p.234) Barlaam who first suggested that his teaching was equivalent to proposing the existence of a higher and lower divinity is plausible. It would appear that Palamas was initially prepared to concede that there was indeed a sense in which one could speak of a higher and lower divinity, but rapidly back-tracked when he saw the opposition that this aroused. The existence of a 'lower divinity' (ὕφευμένη θεότης) could be inferred from Dionysius,¹⁶ but it was too open to misinterpretation, so in the version of his *Third Letter to Akindynos* which Palamas redacted for inclusion in his collected works he omits some statements and adds a clarification to others. There is no need to posit a *volte-face* or attempt at concealment. Palamas consistently denied that he taught the existence of higher and lower divinities in the way that his opponents claimed.

The issue of two levels of divinity is closely connected with Palamas' understanding of participation. Originally a Platonic concept designed to express how the particular relates to the Form, participation comes in late Platonism to indicate how an essential reality becomes operative at a lower level of being. With the Christian introduction of a Creator-God, participation becomes the mode by which the transcendent deity is active in the created order. 'The one activity', as Tollefsen puts it, 'is pluralized in accordance with the divinely predefined receptive potentiality and capacity of creatures.'¹⁷ For there are different degrees of participation, ranging from participation in God in the way that an effect participates in its cause, at one end of the scale, to sharing in God in the way that the saints, 'receptive of the thearchic ray of the principle of light',¹⁸ share in the divine glory, at the other. Akindynos can only see these pluralized divine activities as created gifts. It is axiomatic for him that a human being cannot participate in God except through that which belongs to the contingent order, for God transcends all power, goodness, life, and immortality 'infinitely an infinite number of times' (ἀπειράκις ἀπείρως). This phrase is repeated so often by Akindynos that it almost becomes his signature.¹⁹ The gulf between God and the created order is absolute. God's processions and operations *ad extra* are only related to him as finite effects are related to their cause. But for Palamas there is only a modal difference between God as transcendent in his (p.235) essential being and God as immanent through his giving of himself to those of his creatures who are receptive of him. The cause (the giver of the gift) and the effect (the gift

given) are *both* accessible on this side of the gulf that separates God from the contingent order without in any way compromising the divine unity.

The scriptural support for participation in God is supplied chiefly by 2 Peter 1:4, ‘partakers of the divine nature’ (θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως), which Palamas finds quoted by St Athanasius of Alexandria,²⁰ and notes also that St Maximus says it is the purpose for which we were created.²¹ Akindynos takes 2 Peter 1:4 to exclude Palamas’ distinction between essence and energies.²² Palamas, however, distinguishes between nature as essence and nature as energy, claiming that the Petrine saying refers to nature in the latter sense because the Fathers say that we cannot participate in the divine essence.²³ Participation in God is though the grace of deification (θέωσις), but the bestowal of this grace does not introduce us into the divine essence. Consequently, the phrasing that Palamas prefers to use in his mature writings is that God has created us ‘in order to make us partakers of his own *divinity*’.²⁴

This ‘divinity’ (θεότης), in Palamas’ usage, is equivalent to ‘energy’. The essence–energies distinction, his opponents never tired of saying, is tantamount to ditheism. Palamas with equal persistence maintains that the transcendent essence differs from the energies only in terms of ineffability and inaccessibility.²⁵ In other words, the difference principally concerns our experience of God rather than God as he is in himself. Yet it is not simply an epistemological difference; the way in which we relate to God reflects God’s actual mode (or modes) of being. This is the point at which non-Palamite thinkers experience the greatest difficulty. Western thought is accustomed to distinguishing what is ‘ontological’ on the level of being and therefore ‘real’ from what is ‘epistemological’ on the level of our thinking and therefore ‘conceptual’. The distinction between the divine essence and the divine energies must consequently be either (p.236) real or conceptual. Palamas, however, avoided the expression ‘conceptual’ (κατ’ ἐπίνοιαν), very likely, I have suggested, because he understood it to mean ‘fictional’. What, then, is the ontological status of the energies? Christoph Erismann has shown in a careful analysis of chapter 136 of the *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* that Palamas takes an Aristotelian (and therefore anti-Platonic) line with regard to universals, bringing to Aristotle the later Greek distinctions between ὑπόστασις (‘substance’ or ‘real existence’), ἀνυπόστατον (‘without substance’ or ‘without existence’), and ἐνυπόστατον (‘having a concrete existence’ or ‘individualized in a hypostasis’).²⁶ The meaning of ἐνυπόστατον underwent development during the Christological debates following the Council of Chalcedon (451), as authors such as Anastasius of Antioch, Leontius of Jerusalem, and especially John Damascene struggled to express ‘an explicit doctrine of the humanity’s in-existence in the hypostasis of the Logos’.²⁷ Palamas builds on this debate on the *enhypostasis* of Christ’s humanity in the Logos to account, by analogy, for activities or energies of the divine essence that are ‘real’, as opposed to merely notional, but have no independent existence apart from the essence. It is in this sense that his teaching, as he claims, is an ‘explication’ of the Christological teaching of the Sixth Ecumenical Council. It is also for this reason, in his view, that the rejection of the essence–energies distinction has as its corollary a Nestorianizing Christology.

Buridan complained at around the time of the Palamite dispute that the bitter Western controversy over the teaching of William of Ockham had arisen because of a lack of logic. The Palamite dispute suffered, if anything, from a surfeit of logic. It began with the exchange of letters between Barlaam and Palamas over the admissibility of apodictic arguments with regard to the Trinity, and continued with debates conducted at a high level between Palamas, Akindynos, and Gregoras about what was logically entailed by the positions adopted by each of the disputants. In the course of these debates, important consideration was given to the role

of philosophy in relation to revelation, to the epistemological basis for our knowledge of God, to the reality of contemplation and ecclesial experience, to the nature of symbols, and to the correct principles governing the exegesis of biblical and patristic texts. In the later stages of the controversy, the debate focussed almost entirely on the exegesis of the New Testament accounts of the Transfiguration. This exegesis was the point on which Palamas' opponents showed themselves to be most vulnerable.

What did the apostles see on Mount Tabor? Was their experience entirely subjective, as Gregoras maintained, or was there an objective change in Christ's appearance, and if there was a change, what did that signify? Akindynos agreed (p.237) with Palamas that the light was objective but disagreed about its cause and significance. He argued that the light was created because it was experienced as a property of Christ's created humanity. Palamas insisted that the light was uncreated because, in virtue of the 'communication of idioms', it must be interpreted as the light of divine glory shining through the humanity of Christ. To call it created was to drive an unacceptable wedge between Christ's human and divine natures.

That is why the Sixth Ecumenical Council (the third of Constantinople, 680–681) came to play such a prominent role in the later stages of the controversy. Convoked to resolve the monothelete controversy, the council had decreed that in virtue of his two natures, divine and human, Christ had two wills and two energies (or operations). Its definition of faith, insisting on both the reality of the two natures and the unity of the person of Christ, declared that the two natures *shine forth* in his one hypostasis (φαμέν δύο αὐτοῦ τὰς φύσεις ἐν τῇ μιᾷ αὐτοῦ διαλαμπούσας ὑποστάσει).²⁸ The nature of this 'shining forth' was at the centre of the last phase of the Palamite controversy. It was the principal topic of the Constantinopolitan synod held in 1368 under the presidency of the patriarch Philotheos to try the case of Prochoros Kydones. Kydones had maintained that the light of the Transfiguration was both created and uncreated because, although it was of divine origin, it was transient and therefore belonged equally to the temporal world. Philotheos objected, arguing that because Christ is composed of divinity and humanity subsisting unconfusedly in a single hypostasis, 'both sets of characteristics are preserved' but the light of the Transfiguration 'is a single reality and belongs to Christ's divinity, or rather, is the radiance and illumination of the trihypostatic deity, and not of the flesh'.²⁹ Kydones' denial of the essence–energies distinction resulted in Christological confusion with regard to the light of the Transfiguration, and it was specifically on this issue (not his objection to Palamite doctrine as such) that he was condemned.

Clarity on the nature of the Transfiguration was important because the apostles' experience of the Transfiguration was seen as the model for the Christian's entry into divine glory. This entry into divine glory is deification, which not simply an eschatological reality (as it was for Akindynos) but for the faithful Christian—no less than for the advanced contemplative—begins in this life:

For as soon as we are baptized, the soul, purified by the Spirit, shines even more brightly than the sun. And not only do we behold the glory of God, but we receive from it a certain splendour. For just as when pure silver is turned towards the sun's rays, it too sends out rays, not from its own nature alone but also from the brilliance (p.238) of the sun, so too does the soul, when it has been purified and has become brighter than silver, receive a ray from the glory of the Spirit and send it back again. That is also why it says 'reflecting the same image' we are transformed by reason of the glory of the Spirit to our own glory which is engendered within us, and that is such glory as is appropriate from the Lord the Spirit.³⁰

Deification is not the perfection of rational nature.³¹ Nor does it only have a moral character, consisting in the attainment of virtue and wisdom. It is a divine *energeia* that transforms the believer, making every saint ‘uncreated by grace’ (ἄκτιστος διὰ τὴν χάριν ὅ).³² This bold phrase—Palamas uses it in the first treatise of his third *Triad* but never repeats it—derives logically from his proof that grace is uncreated.³³ If grace is uncreated, it follows that those who share in grace share in its uncreated character, not becoming what God is ‘essentially’ but partaking of his ‘energetic’ mode of existence.³⁴ In the New Testament, particularly in the Pauline and Johannine writings, light is one of the most potent images of divinity.³⁵ The light of Tabor represents an unmediated experience of the divine, a deifying gift that transforms the believer.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the reception of Palamas by Western theologians is not the mistaken notion that Palamas, like the pagan Neoplatonists, posits an intermediate sphere of reality between God and the contingent order, but that by his distinction between the divine essence and the energies he attempts to solve a problem that Western theologians simply do not have. Even if it is conceded that Palamas’ arguments have substance, they are often regarded as beside the point. The simultaneous transcendence and immanence of God can be expressed adequately, Western theologians believe, without recourse to the language of essence and energies. Even among the Fathers, Cyril of Alexandria teaches a profound doctrine of the appropriation of divine life by the believer that can begin here in this world without the need to distinguish between essence and energies. For Palamas, however, and for the (p.239) hesychast tradition that he represents, the whole question of the appropriation of divine life had come, in the century after Cyril, to be set within the parameters established by Dionysius the Areopagite. Thus, on the one hand, ‘[t]he modes of divine union and difference in the hidden life of God are forever unknowable’,³⁶ and on the other, the divine processions, or *proodoi* (which Dionysius, in contrast to the pagan Neoplatonists, holds to be non-substantial), are ‘God, as it were, in transit, transcendent communications, “imparticipably participated”’³⁷ as God himself ‘gives himself, opens himself to participation, enables the same in his creatures, and so leads them back to himself’ in a great cycle of grace.³⁸ The essence–energies distinction, even if not stated precisely in Palamite terms, is integral to the Dionysian vision of human fulfilment in God. Consequently, the distinction not only appears unnecessary to those who do not share Dionysius’ vision, but also comes up against the hostility of many modern theologians to Dionysius’ *exitus–reditus* scheme of salvation.

Another related obstacle is the use of the Dionysian tradition in its Palamite expression by Orthodox theologians such as Lossky and Yannaras as *the* criterion of Christian authenticity.³⁹ Lossky remains a towering figure. There is no doubt that it was largely through him that the notion of energies became ‘the central category in contemporary Orthodox theology for expressing divine–human communion’.⁴⁰ Christos Yannaras, who regards Lossky’s *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* as the most important Orthodox work of the twentieth century, builds on his insights, correcting and refining his distinctions. We must be clear, Yannaras insists, that when we are talking about the divine essence and energies we are talking about realities, not just about ‘approaches’ and ‘methodologies’. These realities must not be reified, but at the same time ‘the distinction between *essence* and the *energies* of the essence is not simply a methodological tool, a *mode* of relation with reality’.⁴¹ We cannot know the *essence* of existents except intellectually by a priori speculation. But if the *essence* is a *mode* by which what is *active* existentially, then knowledge of this mode is possible but only by *participation*, as experience of relation.

That is why distinguishing between *essence* and *energies* [Yannaras goes on to say] or rejecting the distinction is a difference not of ‘approaches’ or methods, or ‘spiritualities’, but

of cultures, of *modes* of life. The *mode* shaped by the post-Roman West is incompatible with the *mode* of the Church—just as the *mode* of individualism, (p.240) of self-interest, is incompatible with the *mode* of love. This way of putting it may seem provocative, but we should not forget that I am putting it so as a child of the West. It is a form of self-criticism—painful, but perhaps liberating too.⁴²

For Yannaras, to pick and choose in metaphysics is simply a sign of intellectual dilettantism. The choice before us, in his view, is stark. It lies between accepting the essence–energies distinction, with a mode of divine existence that is known experientially as an active mode and is both rational (as ek-static) and participable (as the foundation of relation), or accepting instead an intellectualist version of God’s essence which, ‘as “pure act”, nullifies the pragmatic character of ecclesial experience and witness’.⁴³

Does this mean that the acceptance of the essence–energies distinction is an indispensable criterion of Christian authenticity? Not all Orthodox thinkers think so. One of the best-known internationally, Metropolitan John Zizioulas, has reservations about what he terms the ‘maximizing’ of the energies in discussions of the relationship between God and the world. ‘The divine energies *qua* energies,’ he declares, ‘never express God’s *personal* presence, since they belong to the level of *nature* and to *all three persons* of the Trinity.’⁴⁴ Like many of his Western colleagues, he sees the energies as a barrier, not an aid, to the experience of God:

It is extremely important not to forget or overlook the fact that the God-world relationship is primarily *hypostatic*, that is, in and through *one person* of the Trinity and not through an aspect of God’s being that belongs to all three of the Trinitarian Persons, such as the divine energies.⁴⁵

Even scholars more sympathetic to Palamas than Zizioulas (such as Ramfos, Marshall, and Bradshaw) have difficulty with the relationship between the energies and the persons, which indicates that this is a major topic, which merits further research.⁴⁶

(p.241) The fact that a senior metropolitan of the Orthodox Church can express reservations about the essence–energies distinction raises the question of whether Orthodoxy can accommodate a pluralistic approach to doctrinal matters of such fundamental importance. Yannaras manifestly believes not. Yet the dilemma he presents us with is surely a false one. The alternative to the Palamite doctrine of divine existence in two modes, the mode of being and the mode of activity, is not necessarily a sterile Aristotelian doctrine of the divine essence as ‘pure act’. The Thomist tradition holds that God is both transcendent (as Being) and immanent (as present and manifest in every being) and that by the unconditional gift of himself through grace he raises the soul to participation in divine life, divine attributes such as life and holiness being not what God *has* but what God *is*. It should be noted, moreover, that the council of 1351 did not make Palamas’ teaching the Orthodox Church’s *exclusive* doctrine of salvation. It declared it ‘most orthodox’, subjected Palamas’ opponents to excommunication, and proscribed any ‘thinking, speaking, or writing against the most holy metropolitan of Thessaloniki’, but did not make the expression of salvation in Palamite terms obligatory.⁴⁷

Pluralism does not necessarily entail relativism. Since Florovsky’s call to ‘return to the Fathers’, his doctrinal paradigm (the ‘neopatristic synthesis’) has been the context in which most Orthodox have reappropriated Palamas. This paradigm, however, is itself undergoing revision.⁴⁸ Whereas Orthodox doctrine has long been seen in the Orthodox world as a unified whole with each Father adding his stone, as it were, to a harmonious edifice (an edifice

which, unlike the imperial city, survived the collapse of 1453), the emphasis is now moving to the Fathers' differences and particularities. An image that better conveys the new emphasis than the architectural metaphor is the metaphor of musical performance. This was perhaps first used by the early fifth-century ascetic, Nilus of Ancyra, who remarks to one of his correspondents:

It is worthy of admiration how you sound with one accord one composition of piety in vibrant notes, like a tuned harp. Each of you succeeds in a specific genre, and nobody is in dissonance, thanks to the mutual obedience, which, by nature, joins the minds of those who are separate in bodies, making them one soul, combining, like a composer, the particular high and bass tones in a harmonious melody. That, which seems to be deviant from the norm, is precisely what creates the harmony, giving savour through the variant subtleties of sound.⁴⁹

(p.242) The metaphor implies that the unity of polyphony is superior to the unity of monody, richer, more textured, and more subtle. Harmony is fundamental—the cacophony of contradiction is unacceptable—but what ‘seems to be deviant from the norm’ adds savour. From the Western viewpoint Palamas could become such a voice, different from the standard narrative but enriching the whole. There are signs that through a deeper understanding of the context in which Palamas developed his theology this is already taking place. One is the increasing number of publications that seek to demonstrate complementarity between Palamas and Western theology. Another is the growing interest in the thinking of Bulgakov, who saw his sophiology as a creative reworking of Palamas.⁵⁰ Yet another, rooted in monastic experience, is the way in which Palamas' teaching can give shape to work on patristic theology, contributing a unifying soteriological perspective without any diminution of academic rigour.⁵¹ In the words of Chrysostom Koutloumousianos, ‘emphasis upon the energies means emphasis upon the personal encounter with God.’⁵² Aristotle Papanikolaou has written that it would be helpful to the Orthodox if they could see the theologies of Augustine and Aquinas ‘as particular attempts to think through the principle of divine–human communion in a specific context and faced with particular challenges, such that their theologies are contributions to the broader Christian attempt to express an understanding of the transcendent God who is radically immanent in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit’.⁵³ If Western Christians could learn likewise to see Palamas as a particular attempt within a specific context to articulate a vision of divine–human communion, he would enter more fully into Western debates on the relationship between divine transcendence and divine immanence, freed from the ideological constructions placed upon him in the past.

Notes:

(¹) Philotheos Kokkinos, *Discourse on Gregory, Archbishop of Thessalonica* 14. 6–7 (ed. Demetrios Tsames, Φιλοθέου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ Κόκκινου ἀγιολογικὰ ἔργα Α [Thessalonian Byzantine Writers 4] [Thessaloniki: Centre of Byzantine Studies, 1985], 441).

(²) Gregory Akindynos, *Letter* 5. 19 (σου καὶ τῶν σῶν ἡλῶν ὅ) (Hero, 14). Cf. *Letter* 30. 4–5, where he describes his addressee as having fallen ‘under the spell of Palamas’ (τοῖς Παλαμᾷ περιπεσὼν φαρμάκοις) (Hero, 104).

(³) Philotheos Kokkinos, *Discourse on Gregory* 112. 6–8 (Tsames, 559).

(⁴) Philotheos, Synodal Tome of 1368 § 19 (Rigo, ‘Il Tomo Sinodale del 1368’, lines 727–30).

(⁵) Nadal takes this to imply that Palamas reserved divinization solely for a monastic elite, ‘a trait characteristic of Messalianism and of many other sects, but not of the Church of Christ’

(Nadal, *La résistance*, ii. 278). In the homilies, however, he frequently refers to deification as the goal of the ordinary Christian (most explicitly, perhaps, in the peroration of *Homily 35*, the second *on the Transfiguration*). It is simply his philosophical and theological *analysis* of deification that, appropriately enough, he does not attempt to set before the *simpliciores*.

(⁶) Philotheos Kokkinos, *Discourse on Gregory* 107. 15–16 (Tsames, 556).

(⁷) Nikephoros Gregoras claims that in 1347 Palamas lobbied to be made patriarch (Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 15, 10; Bonn ed., ii, 786. 4–5). John Kantakouzenos reports that although many thought he was the best-qualified candidate for the patriarchate after the deposition of John XIV Kalekas, the bishops, on being allowed a free vote, chose Isidore (Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum libri IV* 4, 3; Bonn ed., iii, 25. 6–26. 4).

(⁸) In *Letter 12. 36*, addressed in 1341 to David Dishypatos : ὁ θαυμάσιος Παλαμᾶς † (Hero, 58); *Letter 44. 70*, addressed in 1345 to Nikephoros Gregoras : τὴν τοῦ ἡθους τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μοχθηρίαν† (Hero, 192). Akindynos reviews the change in his relationship with Palamas in the first six paragraphs of his *Discourse before the Patriarch John Kalekas*, delivered in the spring of 1343 (critical text in Nadal, ‘Gregorio Akíndinos’, 258–84), where he asserts that although he supported Palamas against Barlaam, his concern for the canonical and theological proprieties after the synod of 1341 turned Palamas against him.

(⁹) Nadal, *La résistance*, ii, 276–7.

(¹⁰) The letters of Palamas, Akindynos, Gregoras, Demetrios Kydones, and others have made us aware of the importance of social networking during the hesychast controversy. All the protagonists knew each other and called on the support of their family and friends. Indeed, it was often social ties that determined where anyone stood in the controversy—a further reason why it was so difficult to resolve the controversy on purely theological grounds.

(¹¹) For example, in his letter of 1344 to Philotheos (at that time *hegoumenos* of the Lavra), written just after his excommunication by Kalekas and the standing synod, he instructs Philotheos at length on what to say in his defence (Christou II, 517–38; Perrella III, 970–1010).

(¹²) In the same letter to Philotheos he describes how he was eager to go and confront Kalekas in person about the injustice of the treason charge until his confrères persuaded him that this would be foolhardy (Palamas, *Letter to Philotheos* 20 [Christou II, 537–8; Perrella III, 1006–8]). At the end of his debate at Nicaea with the Chionai (apparently a group of Christian Judaizers converted to Islam) he was struck in the face by a bystander outraged by his outspokenness in defence of the Christian faith (*Report of the debate with the Chionai by the emir Orkhan’s Greek doctor, Taronites* 16: Anna Philippidis-Braat, ‘La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs: dossier et commentaire’, *TM* 7 [1979], 109–222, at 183–5).

(¹³) Juan Sergio Nadal, S.J., ‘La redaction première de la *Troisième lettre de Palamas à Akindynos*’, *OCP* 40 (1974), 233–85.

(¹⁴) Palamas’ *Third Letter to Akindynos* was first published by Meyendorff as ‘Une lettre inédite de Grégoire Palamas à Akindynos’ in *Theologia* 24 (1953), 3–28 (= Meyendorff, *Byzantine Hesychasm*, Study III) from the collected works of Palamas in the fifteenth-century manuscripts Paris. gr. 1238 and Coisl. 99, and reprinted in Christou I, 296–312, and Perrella III, 574–604. Nadal discovered the earlier version in Monacensis gr. 223.

(¹⁵) Nadal, ‘La redaction première’, 280.

⁽¹⁶⁾ See Palamas, *Third Letter to Akindynos* 5, in Akindynos' version (Nadal, 'La redaction première', 252), where Palamas appeals for support to Dionysius, *Letter II to Gaius* (Ritter, 158). In this letter Dionysius distinguishes between the deifying gift, which he calls θεότης, and the giver of the gift, who is beyond all things and beyond θεαρχία, but he does not use the expression ὑφειμένη θεότης.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Tollefsen, *Activity and Participation*, 200.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Palamas, *Participation* 9 (Christou II, 145; Perrella I, 1082).

⁽¹⁹⁾ The phrase comes from Maximus the Confessor, *Questions to Thalassius* 60. 42 and 63. 230 (Laga and Steel, *Quaestiones as Thalassium*, ii, 75 and 159). According to the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, Akindynos uses ἀπειράκις ἀπείρως 230 times. Palamas quotes a similar phrase from Maximus' *Ambiguum* 10—where the divine essence is described as ἀπειρία ἀπειράκις ἐξηρημένη (PG 91, 1168A)—but only twice, in his *Letter to Arsenios* 8 (Christou II, 320–1; Perrella III, 616) and *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 237, Perrella I, 1268), both dating from 1342. It does not become central to his thinking, as it does for Akindynos.

⁽²⁰⁾ Palamas, *On divine and deifying participation* 8 (Christou II, 143; Perrella I, 1078), quoting Athanasius, *Letter to Serapion* I, 24 (PG 26, 585C–588A).

⁽²¹⁾ Palamas, *Theophanes* 13 (Christou II, 236; Perrella I, 1266), quoting Maximus the Confessor, *Various Chapters on Theology and the Economy* 1, 42 (PG 90, 1193D).

⁽²²⁾ Akindynos, *Refutations of the Dialogue between an Orthodox and a Barlaamite* III, 90 (Nadal, *Gregorii Acindyni Refutationes Duae*, 304–5).

⁽²³⁾ Palamas, *Triads* I, 3, 23 (Meyendorff, 161. 2–6); *150 Chapters* 146. 8–11 (Sinkewicz, 250–2).

⁽²⁴⁾ Palamas, *150 Chapters* 105 (Sinkewicz, 200). Palamas' discussions of 2 Peter 1:4 seem to be the only instance (in contrast, say, to his exegesis of Joel 3:1) in which he does not insist on the precise wording of Scripture. Daniel Keating, in correspondence with me, finds this telling, for it shows Palamas' 'metaphysical difficulty with what the passage seems to state'. The difficulty arises, I suspect, because of the technical sense acquired by the word 'nature' (*physis*) in the Christological debates of the fifth and sixth centuries. The Chalcedonians took *physis* to be equivalent to *ousia* in contrast to the miaphysites who used it as an alternative for *hypostasis*. Palamas was not going to admit participation in the divine *physis* in the sense of *ousia*. Hence his distinguishing between *physis* as nature and *physis* as divinity.

⁽²⁵⁾ See, for example, Palamas' *Letter to John Gabras* 3 (Christou II, 327; Perrella III, 626).

⁽²⁶⁾ For an illuminating analysis of the concept of the ἐνυπόστατον, see Michael Lang's important article, 'Anhypostatos–enhypostatos'.

⁽²⁷⁾ Lang, 'Anhypostatos–enhypostatos', 648–9. See, for example, John Damascene, *Dialectica*. fus. 45. 17–22 (ed. Kotter I, 110), cited and translated by Lang, 'Anhypostatos–enhypostatos', 649–50.

⁽²⁸⁾ Denzinger, 292. The verb διαλάμπειν ('to shine forth') perhaps deliberately echoes the λάμπειν of the Gospel accounts of the Transfiguration (cf. Matthew 17:22, Luke 17:24).

⁽²⁹⁾ Philotheos, Synodal Tome of 1368, §17 (Rigo, 'Il Tomo Sidonale del 1368', lines 687–91).

⁽³⁰⁾ John Chrysostom, *On the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Homily VII, 5 (PG 61, 448), quoted by Philotheos Kokkinos in the Synodal Tome of 1368 § 13 (Rigo, ‘Il Tomo Sidonale del 1368’, lines 551–60). Palamas himself uses the same image in *Triads* III, I, 35 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 627, lines 14–21; Perrella I, 834), but derives it from Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity* 11, 4. Like his namesake of Nyssa, Palamas speaks of the transfigurative power of the Spirit in those who ascend in contemplation to the true light of Christ without, like Chrysostom, alluding to baptism.

⁽³¹⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 30 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 613, line 24; Perrella I, 822).

⁽³²⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 31 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 617, line 24; Perrella I, 826).

⁽³³⁾ Palamas, *Triads* III, 1, 8 (Meyendorff, *Défense*, 571–3; Perrella I, 782–4). Palamas sums up his argument in *150 Chapters* 68 (Sinkewicz, 162; Perrella III, 78).

⁽³⁴⁾ *Becoming Uncreated* is the title of an interesting work by Daniel Rogich (a former student of both Meyendorff and Radović), who explores the experiential aspects of ‘the search for God within the human heart—in the experience of uncreated grace in the “image of God” within’ (Daniel M. Rogich, *Becoming Uncreated: the Journey to Human Authenticity* [Minneapolis, Minnesota: Light and Life Publishing, 1997], xvi).

⁽³⁵⁾ For example, Ephesians 5:8 (‘now in the Lord you are light’), 1 Timothy 6:16 (‘he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light’), John 1:9 (‘the true light ... was coming into the world’), John 8:12 (‘I am the light of the world’), 1 John 1:5 (‘God is light’).

⁽³⁶⁾ Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 72.

⁽³⁷⁾ Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 78.

⁽³⁸⁾ Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 100.

⁽³⁹⁾ See Paul L. Gavrilyuk, ‘The Reception of Dionysius in Twentieth-Century Eastern Orthodoxy’, in Coakley and Stang, *Re-Thinking Dionysius the Areopagite*, 177–93. Gavrilyuk himself is not fully convinced of Dionysius’ doctrinal orthodoxy.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God: Trinity, Apophaticism, and Divine-Human Communion* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 16.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Yannaras speaking on essence and energies in Norman Russell, *Metaphysics as a Personal Adventure: Christos Yannaras in Conversation with Norman Russell* (Yonkers, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2017), 57.

⁽⁴²⁾ Yannaras in Russell, *Metaphysics as a Personal Adventure*, 57–8.

⁽⁴³⁾ Yannaras in Russell, *Metaphysics as a Personal Adventure*, 61.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, ed. Paul McPartlan (London: T and T Clark, 2006), 29 (emphasis original).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 30 (emphasis original). For a fuller discussion of Zizioulas’s attitude to the essence–energies distinction, see Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 106–27. Papanikolaou aligns himself with Zizioulas. A Palamite might respond that even though the energies belong to the nature, they are always exercised by the Trinitarian Persons; the energies, like the nature, are manifested only by the Persons.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Palamas discussed it on several occasions, principally in response to Akindynos' attempt to equate the energies with the divine persons, but he would not have claimed to have said the last word on it. See *Antirrhetics against Akindynos* VI, 58, 61, 67, 81 (Christou III, 429–30, 431–3, 437, 447–8; Perrella II, 738, 742–4, 752, 744); cf. *Unity and Distinction* 15, 16, 21 (Christou II, 79–80, 84; Perrella I, 950–2, 960), *Dialogue of an Orthodox with a Barlaamite* 25 (Christou II, 187; Perrella I, 1168), and *150 Chapters* 90–1 (Sinkewicz, 188–90; Perrella III, 102–4).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Synodal Tome of 1351, §51 (Karmiris, *Monumenta*, 404–5). The same judgement is repeated in the Synodal Tome of 1368 § 22 (Antonio Rigo, 'Il Tomo Sinodale del 1368', lines 885–92, in Rigo, *Gregorio Palamas e oltre*, 131).

⁽⁴⁸⁾ As a polemical stance it has largely been abandoned, but as a research project, as Paul Gavrilyuk says, 'neopatristic theology remains a work in progress' (*Georges Florovsky*, 270).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Nilus of Ancyra, *To Agathius*, PG 79, 1056CD, quoted and translated by Chrysostom Koutlounousianos, *The One and the Three: Nature, Person and Triadic Monarchy in the Greek and Irish Patristic Tradition* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2015), 87–8. Fr Chrysostom's book is itself a wonderful example of patristic study conducted in the spirit of harmonious melody.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky*, 143. One notable theologian who has found Bulgakov helpful, as already mentioned, is John Milbank.

⁽⁵¹⁾ I am thinking here in particular of Alexander Golitzin's *Mystagogy* and Chrysostom Koutlounousianos's *The One and the Three*. Both Bishop Alexander and Fr Chrysostom have an Athonite background.

⁽⁵²⁾ Koutlounousianos, *The One and the Three*, 162.

⁽⁵³⁾ Papanikolaou, *Being with God*, 155.

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